Media and Communication Skills

CIVIL SOCIETY EMPOWERMENT
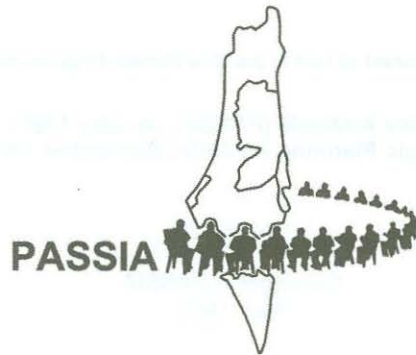
Media &
Communication
Skills

PASSIA

PASSIA
Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

PASSIA, the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, is an Arab, non-profit Palestinian institution, with a financially and legally independent status. It is not affiliated with any government, political party or organization. PASSIA seeks to present the Question of Palestine in its national, Arab and international contexts through academic research, dialogue and publication.

PASSIA endeavors that its seminars, symposia and workshops, whether international or intra-Palestinian, be open, self-critical and conducted in a spirit of harmony and cooperation.

PASSIA's *Civil Society Empowerment through Training and Skills Development* program has been designed to provide training seminars for Palestinian NGO professionals, practitioners and university graduates, with the aim to improve their operational abilities. It is hoped that this will enable them to deal more efficiently with the tasks ahead in their civil society.

This publication contains the proceedings of the Training Program on Media and Communication Skills. All papers included represent the free expression of their authors and do not necessarily represent the judgement or opinions of PASSIA.

Previously published as part of the *Civil Society Empowerment* series:

Policy Analysis (PASSIA, January 1998)
Strategic Planning (PASSIA, September 1998)

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

PART III: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION – EXPERIENCES FROM PALESTINE

APPENDICES:

PREFACE

Civil society organizations are the link between the citizenry and the public sector. In order to create a stable and democratic system in Palestinian society, it is necessary to foster a skilled, knowledgeable and active cadre of civil society organizations to link the people and the institutions that govern them. To perform their manifold roles most effectively and constructively, civil society organizations need to develop their institutional capacities. With its *Civil Society Empowerment through Training and Skills Development* program implemented over the last two years, PASSIA has developed a set of training programs designed to provide practical hands-on training and meet these needs.[1]

The human resource is a fundamental pillar of any stable society and developing human capacity is seen not only as a tool that contributes to meeting the current and future needs of the Palestinian civil society, but also as one that enables its full participation at all levels.

Each training program incorporates theoretical approaches and practical training in fields relevant to civil society in terms of procedures, skills and development. Each seminar includes four major, interrelated activities:

1. *Research and Preparation.* One month before the training program begins, participants are provided with preparatory reading material gathered by the PASSIA Project Team in coordination with the trainers and lecturers. The participants are also required to write a short paper on an issue related to Palestinian civil society.

2. *Intensive Training Seminar.* Trainees attend a six-day lecture program conducted by local and international experts. The lectures range from theoretical concepts to functional skills, exercises and case studies, whereby the participants are continuously encouraged to apply what they have learned to the institutions with which they are involved.

---

[1] Available so far are the proceedings, published by PASSIA, of the two previous seminars on civil society empowerment: *Policy Analysis* (January 1998), and *Strategic Planning* (September 1998).

3. *Follow-up Program.* The intensive seminar is followed by four workshops, spread over a two-month period and concentrating on skill enhancement. The major goal is to link and apply the skills learned to actual issues of concern in the participants' working environment. Participants prepare for the workshops by completing practice-oriented writing assignments.

4. *Conclusion.* At the close of the training program, each participant is required to submit a final essay. The goal is to incorporate what they have learned and their practical experience into a coherent project.

CIVIL SOCIETY EMPOWERMENT: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS[2]

The PASSIA training program on Media and Communication Skills was implemented during the period November 1998-May 1999. It included lectures on the general concept of civil society and its role and relevance with regard to the policy process. The focus of the training program was on a general introduction into the themes and fields of media and communication. Other parts dealt with issues related to communication strategies, effective presentations, developing communication skills, planning media events, and public relations. Also included were case studies and practical media-communication experiences from Palestine.

THIS REPORT

The publication presented here contains the proceedings and instructions of the training program and can be used as a handbook that is designed to introduce a wider audience to the components and techniques of media relations and communication strategies. PASSIA hopes that this publication will make a valuable contribution to the enhancement of the Palestinian civil society community and benefit a large number of practitioners and professionals who seek to increase their knowledge and skills.

The PASSIA Project Team
April 1999

---

[2] For the full lecture program and details on participants and lecturers see the PASSIA Annual Report 1998 or PASSIA's homepage at http://www.passia.org.

PREFACE

C ivil society organizations are the link between the citizenry and the public sector. In order to create a stable and democratic system in Palestinian society, it is necessary to foster a skilled, knowledgeable and active cadre of civil society organizations to link the people and the institutions that govern them. To perform their manifold roles most effectively and constructively, civil society organizations need to develop their institutional capacities. With its *Civil Society Empowerment through Training and Skills Development* program implemented over the last two years, PASSIA has developed a set of training programs designed to provide practical hands-on training and meet these needs.[1]

The human resource is a fundamental pillar of any stable society and developing human capacity is seen not only as a tool that contributes to meeting the current and future needs of the Palestinian civil society, but also as one that enables its full participation at all levels.

Each training program incorporates theoretical approaches and practical training in fields relevant to civil society in terms of procedures, skills and development. Each seminar includes four major, interrelated activities:

1. *Research and Preparation.* One month before the training program begins, participants are provided with preparatory reading material gathered by the PASSIA Project Team in coordination with the trainers and lecturers. The participants are also required to write a short paper on an issue related to Palestinian civil society.

2. *Intensive Training Seminar.* Trainees attend a six-day lecture program conducted by local and international experts. The lectures range from theoretical concepts to functional skills, exercises and case studies, whereby the participants are continuously encouraged to apply what they have learned to the institutions with which they are involved.

---

[1] Available so far are the proceedings, published by PASSIA, of the two previous seminars on civil society empowerment: *Policy Analysis* (January 1998), and *Strategic Planning* (September 1998).

3. *Follow-up Program.* The intensive seminar is followed by four work-shops, spread over a two-month period and concentrating on skill enhancement. The major goal is to link and apply the skills learned to actual issues of concern in the participants' working environment. Participants prepare for the workshops by completing practice-oriented writing assignments.

4. *Conclusion.* At the close of the training program, each participant is required to submit a final essay. The goal is to incorporate what they have learned and their practical experience into a coherent project.

CIVIL SOCIETY EMPOWERMENT: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS[2]

The PASSIA training program on Media and Communication Skills was implemented during the period November 1998-May 1999. It included lectures on the general concept of civil society and its role and relevance with regard to the policy process. The focus of the training program was on a general introduction into the themes and fields of media and communication. Other parts dealt with issues related to communication strategies, effective presentations, developing communication skills, planning media events, and public relations. Also included were case studies and practical media-communication experiences from Palestine.

THIS REPORT

The publication presented here contains the proceedings and instructions of the training program and can be used as a handbook that is designed to introduce a wider audience to the components and techniques of media relations and communication strategies. PASSIA hopes that this publication will make a valuable contribution to the enhancement of the Palestinian civil society community and benefit a large number of practitioners and professionals who seek to increase their knowledge and skills.

The PASSIA Project Team
April 1999

---

[2] For the full lecture program and details on participants and lecturers see the PASSIA Annual Report 1998 or PASSIA's homepage at http://www.passia.org.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi[1]

Training and other activities that contribute to human capacity development are fundamental to the stability of any society and its ability to both contribute to global affairs and to manage its own. It has thus been the aim of the PASSIA project on *Civil Society Empowerment through Training and Skills Development* to increase the yet weak institutional capacity of Palestinian society and to help attain sustainable development through a focused effort to increase the managerial and communication capabilities of Palestinian professionals, especially in the civil society sector.

The training program on *Media and Communication Skills* was chosen because good governance and civil society depend on an effective flow of information and communications.

Civil society organizations need to convey their respective messages through various media – to governments, other organizations, members, and the general public, etc. - which requires the ability to speak publicly (both effectively and persuasively), interviewing, and the successful writing of articles and other printed materials. Effective communication management is thus a necessary tool for development, public relations, advocacy, lobbying and fundraising.

The PASSIA training program on *Media and Communication Skills* was specifically designed to enhance the effectiveness of activities of those who are working in advocacy, good governance and public awareness issues. It aims at achieving increased efficiency amongst civil society organizations in using the media in support of their concerns, including mobilizing public opinion for their causes.

The strategic significance of this training program is derived from the notion that if civil society organizations can better articulate their goals, they are more likely to get the attention and consideration they deserve and that they need to bring about positive change, both in terms of making commu-

---

[1] Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi founded PASSIA in 1987 and has been its head ever since. He is the co-founder and member of several other Palestinian institutions, regional networks and international institutions.

nity views known as well as raising the community's awareness concerning official policies.

The training program thus focused on skills such as how to present information convincingly, how to effectively deal with the public (including constituencies, government and donors), and how to utilize promotional activities (including materials, campaigns, fundraising, etc.) to better serve their causes.

Media and communications is a rapidly developing art and science, and nobody can afford to continue with classical traditional methods whilst ignoring those of recent years. Palestinians, as the entire world knows, were amongst the pioneers in the Arab World when it came to establishing newspapers *(Falasteen*, Jerusalem, 1909 and *Al-Karmel*, Nazareth, 1910) and printing houses, in a bid to promote their ideas and businesses. Consequently, their expertise in the fields of import/export, tourism, and industry was widely acknowledged and greatly appreciated in the capitals of their Arab neighbors.

Alas, the political struggle had a devastating effect on the Palestinians' economy, their national institutions and their relations with others. Perhaps now that the political agenda is searching with the support of the world for a settlement, there will be an opportunity for Palestinians to repair the damage of the past, increase the capacity of their institutions and realize the potential that exists for developing their society. In this context, the venue of media and communications is vital if we are to succeed in overcoming the complications of the transitional phase through which we are currently passing.

PART I:

CIVIL SOCIETY, THE POLICY PROCESS AND THE MEDIA

PART II.

CIVIL SOCIETY,
THE POLICY PROCESS
AND THE MEDIA

1 THE MAKING OF A PALESTINIAN CIVIL SOCIETY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Dr. Ishaq Y. Al-Qutub[1]

INTRODUCTION

The foundation of any civil society is the provision of civil freedoms including the freedom of worship, ideology, movement, residency, thought, conscience, organization and public assembly, in addition to freedom of expression. Basic freedom means the welfare of the individual and the development of his life and personality within the context of the welfare of the community and society, and it is the constitution of the State, in addition to religion and the prevailing culture and values, that define the various kinds of freedoms. Democracy prevails only when freedom exists, which is why the constitution of the State also mentions implicitly the means of defending those same freedoms.

An important aspect of civil freedom is the protection of the rights of individuals and groups. Such rights, including equality before the law, should be preserved by the State, regardless of the color, religion, race, ethnicity or language of its citizens. As for freedom of conscience, it means the right of the individual to develop his/her thoughts and beliefs concerning moral issues on the basis of his/her faith and religion or from an ideological standpoint. Naturally, these same thoughts and beliefs will usually dictate how one behaves.

DEFINITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The term 'civil society' is used as an analytic term in social sciences. It is also used as a 'normative category' that is subject to change in accordance with the changing political and historical circumstances as well as changing theories. In this context, we talk about liberalism, the concept of social democracy, the concept of radical democracy and the Islamic concept. One can pose the question: Is 'civil society' a synonym of 'democracy' or is it equivalent to political participation, or a parliament? How do we consider the local initiatives of citizens in organizing such institutions as neighborhood councils or groups to protect the environment or consumers and the like? How do we view non-governmental organizations: as a mode of life, as an alternative culture or as pressure groups?

---

[1] Dr. Ishaq Y. Al-Qutub is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Development Studies, Al-Quds University, Jerusalem.

Philosophers, sociologists and thinkers such as Hobbs, Montesquieu, John Stewart Mill, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and Jean Boden, to name a few, view civil society as a form of: a) the rule of the law, b) the separation between the State and society, and c) the balance among authorities, or between the prevailing forces in society and the State.

Finally, a distinction should be made between 'nation' and 'nationality' or national identity. A nation can be transformed into a civil society, and in turn, the civil society can be transformed into a sovereign state. Ensuring that individual human needs are compatible with the collective needs of the society and the market system is an important way of facilitating the move toward civil society.

WHY CIVIL SOCIETY?

Throughout history, civil society came into being in response to one-party rule in communist states, to highly centralized decision-making in liberal states, and in response to market economy control over social, economic and cultural life. In addition civil society emerged in response to the presence of dictatorships in Third World states and finally, in order to overcome stagnant organizational and traditional structures within society.

The ultimate goal of any people should be the establishment of a society in which equality, participation, representation and justice prevails. I want to emphasize that democracy and civil society are two separate concepts, with the former envisaging the means to achieve the latter.

PREREQUISITES OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In a paternalistic, patriarchal society, such as Palestinian society, it is useful to define the relationship between the citizen and the State as follows:

- There should be a separation between the State and the household. The two are structurally different: the household often consists of only one family, while the State is made up of thousands of families; hence the difference between the head of the household and that of the State.

- There should be a clear distinction between the State and society or in essence between the State institutions and those of society.

- The individual should be viewed as a citizen, a distinct legal entity regardless of his/her loyalties. There should be clear distinction between the mechanisms, goals and functions of the various social and economic institutions.

- A clear distinction should be made between societal organizations consisting of citizens who voluntarily pool their resources to achieve common goals and the usual organic social structures.

- Civil society will not develop in a weak state, i.e., one where the authority is weak, but emerges when there is a strong state in order to provide a balance of power.

- There is a need to monitor the State authority, since the State can monitor society and has the potential and ability to exceed its mandate and obligations.

- There is a need to define the relationship between the State and society, since the possibility of the former suppressing the latter exists.

- Civil society is a function of the relationship between State and society and a source from which the legitimacy of the State can be strengthened.

PALESTINIAN SOCIETY: THE CHALLENGES

Throughout history, Palestinian society has been affected by a succession of regimes; this is clear in the fact that Jerusalem has been conquered and re-conquered approximately 25 times. In modern history, Palestine witnessed the transfer from the Ottoman Turks to the British Mandate rule, then the change from British colonialism to the partitioning of Palestine, which resulted in the declaration of the State of Israel, including over two thirds of Palestine. The West Bank and Gaza Strip became two separate entities under separate administration: the former became part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, while the latter was put under the administration of the Egyptian Government. In 1994, following the Oslo Agreement, parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were placed under the rule of the Palestinian Authority. This succession of regimes meant there was a transition from authoritarian, colonialist and militaristic rule and the division of society into two distinct classes (namely the upper rich and the lower poor) to a society seeking independence, building a civil social, political and economic order, and a three-class society (upper, middle and lower). Any final settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, from a Palestinian perspective, must result in Palestinian sovereignty and self-dependence, requiring the proper utilization of human and physical resources, sustainable institution building, and subsequent social and economic development.

The first challenge arose with the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which called for the establishment of national home for the Jews in Palestine: a clear violation of the rights of the Palestinian people. The process of strengthening the Jewish community in Palestine involved the consolidation of Jews mainly, from European countries with the subtle but effective cooperation of the Western forces, mainly the British Mandate government. The formation of the purely Israeli institutions such as the kibbutz, the *moshav*, and the *Histadrut*, in addition to the various educational institutions, was essential to the formation of the Jewish State later on.

The second challenge was to restore the Palestinian self-identity and to resist the expansion of Jewish settlement in Palestine. When the Palestinians reacted to the new situation, their attempts were marked by a lack of good planning and other serious weaknesses pertaining to structure and performance.

The third challenge arose when the Arab League involved itself in making major decisions related to the future of the Palestinians. At the same time, Palestinians felt the need to structure their contemporary society by engaging in institution building; consequently, a large number of political par-

ties, labor and professional unions, charitable organizations, clubs, and mass media institutions were established.

The fourth challenge was the most difficult; namely, to achieve unity after the dispersion of the Palestinians following the War of 1948. The aim of the State of Israel, since its declaration, was to create entities and prevent unity or direct communication between the areas where Palestinians existed within the cease-fire line, which separated the residents of over 90 villages from their farms and land. Three areas were defined: the southern region encompassing Bedouins, the collective villages of the Triangle, and the northern region around Nazareth. The Palestinians were treated as second-class citizens and restrictions were applied covering various aspects of their social and economic wellbeing.

PALESTINIAN SOCIETY AFTER 1948

After 1948, the Gaza Strip and what became known as the West Bank were outside the range of Palestinian control. The two areas were physically separated, there was a vast difference between them regarding the availability of natural resources, and both their economic and authority systems were distinct and unconnected.

The overall status of Palestinians between 1948-1967 can be summarized as follows:

- Jordanian (West Bank) and Egyptian (Gaza) government systems were applied, meaning that the Palestinians gradually lost control over their political, economic and civic affairs, whilst becoming increasingly dependent on the Arab states, which by now were playing a significant role in attempting to resolve the conflict with Israel and restore the rights of the Palestinian people. Moreover, the role of the local civil organizations was marginalized by the Jordanian and Egyptian authorities.

- Palestinian performance inside Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was inconsistent and varied from one area to the next. In Israel the Palestinians were denied any contact with the Arab states and were obliged to start establishing their civil societies from zero. The fact that they were forced to accept Israeli sovereignty necessitated the adaptation to new conditions. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinians encountered diverse conditions such as: 1) the cutting off of direct communication between the two areas; 2) the slow revitalization of civil societies that had been established in Palestine starting in the 1920s; 3) the necessary but difficult adaptation to new local government systems; 4) an increase in the population density; 5) greater participation in government administration; and 6) the emergence of an oil economy in the Gulf region with Palestinian involvement. New political parties were formed such as the Ba'ath, National Liberation, and Moslem Brotherhood parties, while Arab nationalists functioned both secretly and openly until free elections were held.

ISRAELI OCCUPATION IN 1967

The impact of the Israeli occupation on the development of the Palestinian civil society was minimal due to the practices of the military authority. The following adverse conditions prevailed:

- the uprooting of Palestinian society and the demolition of its infrastructure due to the longest occupation in the history of the region;

- the shift from state building to settlement expansion in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and on the Golan Heights;

- the refusal of Israel to abide by tens of UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and other international human rights conventions and treaties;

- the application of severe restrictions on Palestinian economic, social, educational and cultural development, the aim being the creation of high dependency on the Israeli economy and other services.

THE PLO AND CIVIL INSTITUTIONS

The establishment of the PLO in the mid 1960s contributed to the success of the attempts to create and restructure civil institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, the institutions were forced to function under abnormal conditions and severe military occupation restrictions far away from the Palestinian leadership.

The Palestinian civil system and the development of local institutions went through various phases, characterized by adverse socioeconomic and political conditions as follows:

- Jordan played a dynamic role in overlooking the operation of local institutions in the West Bank. In Gaza, the National United Front was formed but with non-civil objectives and did not play a major role in structuring the civil societies.

- When the PLO was acclaimed in Rabat 1974 as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian Front was created encompassing various factions such as Fatah, the Communist Party, the Liberation Front, the Democratic Front and others.

- Internal and external structures became aware of each other and two types of institutions emerged: formal ones, including domestic ones concerned with health, education, welfare, etc., which were recognized by the Israeli Military Authority, and unrecognized and unapproved grassroots movements, which were involved mainly in voluntary work in rural and urban areas.

- In the municipal elections of 1967, Palestinian nationalist groups managed to secure seats in main village and city councils and were able to organize openly under their own leadership. This created a shift from the philanthropic concept to that of development. Institutions like the Palestinian Higher Education Council were formed and a conference that dealt with the issue of supporting Palestinian institutions was held

in 1981. The Jordanian Palestinian Joint Committee was established in 1978 as a result of the Arab Summit held in Baghdad.

- The Israeli Military Authority took a series of steps to weaken the Palestinian civil organizations, which Israel often considered as subversive institutions. Amongst these steps were attempts to have secret informants from among the Palestinians infiltrate the local organizations.

- The role of the PLO, when it had its head offices 'outside', increased in running the affairs of the Palestinians who were 'inside'. The PLO delegated a number of Personalities for Dialogue with the USA through Jordan, without consulting the Palestinian ranks and file in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This marginalized the process of making collective political and social decisions and created a temporary gap between the 'outside' and the 'inside'.

- The *Intifada* emerged due to local deteriorating political and economic conditions, which led to gradual self-management, the amalgamation of political factions under a united leadership and linkage with the 'outside' leadership, the PLO. This resulted, amongst other things, in an increase in foreign aid to local institutions.

THE PNA AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Palestinian society shares several features with modern societies but whilst being characterized by traditional peculiarities in defining the political and social identity. The areas and type of environment in which Palestinians live, i.e., village, urban area etc, and strong familial and tribal ties all contribute to the prevailing social structure and affect Palestinian development and policies. Neutral groups and individuals were marginalized from the decision-making process. Today, both Moslems and Christians share together the responsibility for building a civil society and should be equally aware that a strong civil society entails cooperation between the two groups in striving toward a common goal.

The influence of the upper class, which once was prominent in Palestinian politics, has gradually diminished as a result of various factors, most important of which is the election of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The election of the council brought to the forefront middle and to a lesser extent lower class individuals (who had become powerful through joining the long national struggle of the PLO).

THE FUTURE OF PALESTINIAN CIVIL SOCIETY

The development of civil institutions has strengthened mainly as a result of international aid. However, the PNA has taken measures in an attempt to organize the non-governmental and philanthropic organizations both in Gaza and West Bank with a view to regulating funding, ensuring more efficient use of human and material resources, and dealing with the overlap in services and functions. Clearly, there is a need to ensure better coordination between the various NGO unions that are currently classified under various categories.

At present, non-governmental and civil institutions have limited power and are unable to influence the decision-making process. The PNA, in attempting to improve the organizational structure, register these organizations and evaluate their status and role still needs to develop a clearer concept with regard to establishing the appropriate procedures. Grassroots organizations fear that their effectiveness, autonomy and impact on the formation of a civil society will become further marginalized as a result of governmental checks and controls.

The following are conditions to be met in order for the Palestinian institutions to make an effective contribution towards building a civil society:

- Regulation and legislation of NGOs to strengthen their role and resources such as in programs for institution building, organization and management. A national council (for the West Bank and Gaza Strip) would be instrumental in the development of policies and strategies.

- allowing greater NGO and civil institution participation in the political decision-making process, with relevant implementation and coordination mechanisms;

- building a civil society requires autonomy, an understanding of roles status, values, and norms related to the role and structure of related institutions. This requires national training programs and further development of the leadership;

- facilitating local, rural and urban community involvement in the policy-making, planning, implementation and evaluation of civil institutions: the objectives, processes, outcomes and impact on sustainable development;

- establishing links with Arab, regional and international civil institutions through a system of exchange and joint projects and activities.

In conclusion, a sustainable Palestinian civil society can be achieved through concerted efforts, the coordination of human and material resources and the application of sound principles with the support of proper legislation. The ultimate objective is to provide the opportunity for Palestinian citizens to enjoy their identity, freedom, equality, and justice, all of which were denied to them for decades.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Galioun, Burhan, et al., *Around the Democratic Option - Critical Studies.* Ramallah: Muwatin, 1997. (Arabic)

Bisharah, Azmi, *A Contribution to the Critic of Civil Society*. Ramallah: Muwatin, 1996. (Arabic)

Al-Hermassi, Abdul Baqi, "The Civil Society and the State as Implemented in Western Politics", in *The Civil Society in the Arab World,* The Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 1992. (Arabic)

Ibrahim, Hassanien T., "The Structure of Civil Society - Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators," *in The Civil Society in the Arab World,* The Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 1992. (Arabic)

Daqqaq, Ibrahim, "Towards Building a Palestinian Civil Society" in The Civil *Society in the Arab World,* The Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 1992. (Arabic)

2 PALESTINIAN CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE POLICY PROCESS

Dr. Nabil Khatib[1]

C ivil society organizations (CSO) are organizations that rely on the (voluntary) participation of people in order to serve a certain issue; the organization could be a political party, or a group of people interested in advocating environmental issues, etc., but all of them aim at making the State accountable. Media professionals claim that they also have a role in this, so both groups, the CSOs and the media, aim at influencing the State's various policies. The question here is how CSOs can use media-communication techniques in affecting the policy process?

The difference between the role of CSOs and the media in this process is that the media is better equipped to relay information to the general public. In addition, in CSOs there are interest groups that lobby for a certain issue, whilst the media is not supposed to have any predetermined interest in a particular issue, so that is another difference. The organizations have an agenda that they want to put into execution in order to influence the general policies or the policymaking process, while the media only aims at defending the general objective and the general good, although one has to take into account that this is not always the case.

The media, like the CSOs, aims at giving the people access to information and this is made possible through rendering the government accountable and by exposing previously 'hidden' things. The interests of the legislative, executive and judiciary bodies are sometimes different to those of the public, which often poses problems. Accordingly, they always have something to hide, especially the executive branch and especially in states where the political process and institution building is not fully developed.

There is no doubt that the Palestinian Parliament, as it is, is one of the pillars of democracy, but the media is always a little suspicious. This suspicion is the result of our desire to defend the general good of the public and the reason why we are constantly asking, "What are the common interests of the executive branch and the legislative branch of the majority that created the executive branch?"

If I were an elected Member of Parliament, my main interest would be to be reelected, which would make me very interested in knowing what the people think about me and my performance. In the countries where the proc-

---

[1] Dr. Nabil Khatib is the Director of the Media Center, Birzeit University.

ess of institution-building and democratic traditions are not developed in their final form, I might 'violate' what my role imposes on me in order to gain the confidence of the people in power – in the executive branch. If this happens, the interest groups and mass media should inform the public of what is going on.

There are two main characteristics that distinguish the Palestinian society as 'civil society' from other societies:

1. It is still starting out on the institution-building process. Even though between 1967 and the early 1990s there were CSOs, NGOs, that were trying to govern, in one way or another, in the absence of a central government, they were not consolidated to the institutions related to the State.
2. It is a society that faces not only the central government, but also the occupation and therefore it needs to influence the local authority – the PNA – the policy-making process and also the occupation authorities. Sometimes we need, as CSOs, to make use of the international media in order to exert pressure on both the PNA and the Israeli Government by developing an international public opinion.

Therefore, it could be said that we are facing two major challenges.

In the particular case of Palestine, we have now neither self-rule nor autonomy. I once asked legal expert Zuheir Anis Qassem what 'self-rule' means from a legal point of view and he told me that he could not define it, as there are 40 different types of self-rule in the world. It is clear, however, that in our case, the self-rule has the potential to develop into statehood, at least from our point of view. One of the main questions is how we, as CSOs, can deal with this rule, knowing that the occupation still exists and that there is an authority – with legislative, executive and judicial branches - that is in power and in charge of policymaking in internal issues such as education, the environment, health services, etc. The fact that we are also trying to influence the Israeli authorities sometimes entails attempting to influence the Authority in order to gain more from the Israelis with regard to the mandatory power of the PLC or the executive branch.

One of the biggest crises that we are facing as Palestinians is that until now, we have not fully realized that we are dealing with two authorities. Many political factions act as if there were only the occupation and nothing else, while others see only the PNA and more or less ignore the occupation, even though the Israeli authorities influence the PNA and the various aspects of our everyday life. Moreover, there is no Palestinian-Israeli consensus regarding the fact that the unique experience we are currently going through should lead to statehood, which complicates the picture further.

In order to influence the general policy in one way or another, all CSOs should know how to influence the media. The best known way to do this is by coming up with a 'hidden agenda' and deciding upon the most suitable time to release information to the media. It is only natural that organizations have their own interests. Save the Children, for example, is an international organization that is interested in children and their environment, and thus,

in influencing the general policy related to children in what it views as a positive manner. One must remember, however, that the vision of other organizations working in the same field could very well differ from that of Save the Children. Once an organization such as Save the Children has studied the current situation of children, the laws related to them and the environment in which they live etc., it decides what it wants to advocate. This could be on a minor level (e.g., projects for children) or on a larger level (e.g., legislation to further protect children).

How should Save the Children go about dealing with the media? It should set an agenda, i.e., decide upon a timetable for the media, in order to direct the media towards a predetermined slogan, a defined demand of the organization (or a number of organizations sharing the same vision). The 'agenda setting' involves bringing up the topic and changing it into an issue that interests the public. Many issues become meaningful the minute they are raised by the media and the public starts discussing it; this is the first step in influencing the policymakers.

The responsibility for the 'agenda setting' is a controversial issue. From the point of view of the media, they should do the 'agenda setting'. In the history of 'big politics', there is the famous Watergate Scandal, in which two journalists working at *The Washington Post* played a major role. It seems that one of the people working with President Nixon came and gave them some inside information concerning the money used for the elections campaign, and they went ahead and raised the issue without first obtaining any decisive evidence. Regardless of the lack of evidence, the fact that it had been suggested that the election campaign of the President of the United States had been marred by corruption was enough for the judiciary to start studying the issue, and when US District Court Judge John Sirica had collected enough evidence he asked for a special hearing in the Congress, which led to the resignation of Richard Nixon. Was it the two journalists from *The Washington Post* who were responsible, or was it the judicial system, the mass media, or the person who leaked the information to the journalists in the first place? Media specialists say that only the media transformed it into a public opinion issue, and thus was practically responsible for the 'agenda setting' with the help of the institutions that had certain interests in raising this issue.

Although organizations themselves frequently do the 'agenda setting', it is not at all unusual for governments themselves to set an agenda by leaking some information, uncovering previously unknown information or by hiding it and then bringing it to light at the appropriate time. For example, there is the issue of the Strategic Defense Initiative and Star Wars that was first raised by President Reagan and then became a public opinion issue that was covered by the media for a very long time. What really happened was that Reagan faced problems in obtaining the money that was required to cover the annual defense budget, especially the MX missiles project, so he raised the issue in order to scare people into pushing Congress to fund the projects that he favored. To do this, he used the magical words, "We want to protect the people from the incoming enemy missiles from the USSR by establishing this defense network in space." Here, the President himself, the head of the executive branch, instigated his own agenda setting process.

How can Palestinian CSOs raise an issue related to the corruption in the PNA, such as last year's case concerning the flour that was unfit for human consumption? First, they need information about the topic and to pass it on to journalists. Again, like with the Watergate Scandal, partial information concerning the flour scandal was leaked by someone in the government to journalists. As a matter of fact journalists often try to benefit from the contradictory interests of different power groups. In this particular case, one of the ministers wanted to uncover the responsible people, so he leaked the information to journalists who wrote about the scandal on the front pages of *Al-Ayyam* and *Al-Quds*. In theory, once organizations have given information to the media, the judiciary branch should then follow the necessary legal procedures, but in the case of the flour scandal, this did not happen; the issue was forgotten about after it reached the media and neither the judiciary nor the legislative branch took the appropriate measures.

If, as sometimes happens, the legislative branch fails to take action after an issue has been raised by media, certain steps can be taken. For example, CSOs can use the media report to exert pressure and lobby the legislative and judiciary branches to ensure that the issue is dealt with properly. In this case, the media wrote about the flour being unfit for human consumption and a committee was established to follow up on the subject. Ideally, the media should have followed up the issue whilst the CSOs should have transformed it into a public opinion issue to facilitate lobbying in the legislative and the judiciary branches. However, neither the CSOs nor the media did what they were supposed to do, so the agenda setting was 'amputated' in a way. Cooperation between media and CSOs can be especially important in cases where the State is not interest in pursuing a certain issue or putting certain policies into practice.

There is a political crisis in Palestine as there are no political parties that constitute a real opposition and that try to influence the general policy of the PNA, which poses a major problem when it comes to playing the game of leaking information to the media in order to serve the common good. A good example involves the political prisoners; was there a single case of a political party leaking information to the media in order to prove that the issue of the prisoners was not documented in the Wye River Memorandum?

With regard to the claims that certain ministries have been mishandling funds and failing to carry out the tasks assigned to them, interest groups made up of people interested in having good living conditions – it could be a political party or any other CSO – should, in practice, take it upon themselves to challenge the role played by the ministries in question. Unfortunately, we do not see this happening.

DISCUSSION

Participant: In our society, there are certain organizations that are 'protected' by international organizations or governments, which means they could easily 'attack' the executive branch. The problems arise when it comes to local Palestinian organizations.

Dr. Nabil Khatib: Does the problem lie in the weakness of the PNA or in the weakness of the organizations? An authority should be subject to transparency and accountability, which means that there would always be the potential for it to be accused, either because of its bad intentions or because it is incapable of taking the decisions and implementing the right policies, even though its intentions are good. If I, as a citizen, do not do my work properly, this may harm, for example, 20 people, whereas if a minister does not do his work properly, the whole population is harmed, which means that the degree of accountability should increase. The PNA always tries to protect itself if a 'mistake' is committed, be it deliberate or accidental. The solution is to achieve a balance between the influence of the PNA and that of the CSOs.

The only book that changed in the 3rd grade's curriculum is the national education book, which now says, "Why is Gaza blossoming? Because it has a port that is full of goods and merchandise and travelers." Who at the Ministry of Education has the right to raise my child to believe in lies? Who gave him the right to shake the confidence between the State, the educational institution, the school and the child? And if the child that reads this happens to live in the Shati Refugee Camp in Gaza, how can we expect him later on to believe anything else that he is told? There is not one interest group talking about this issue, because there is a lack of confidence resulting from the weakness of the CSOs. This is the result not only of the influence of the PNA, but also of the fact that the CSOs are surrendering to the idea that the Authority has the power and if they do something in the name of human rights, they will end up in trouble.

There is no doubt that if we talk about the corruption or human rights, the PNA's response might be blunt, but even when it concerns everyday issues, we do not see the role of the CSOs. Did any NGO interested in educational issues and developing the curriculum speak about the 3rd grade book? Did they issue a press release or leak information to the press? In reality our problem has less to do with big issues such as corruption, human rights violations, etc. - issues that are covered by the foreign media - than with local issues that are very important to us and that do not come in the circle of interest of the international media.

Participant: How can we benefit from public relations in creating and passing on a message to the media in order to mobilize the public?

Dr. Khatib: The best method for exerting pressure is to transform a problem into a public opinion issue, using the media. During the *Intifada,* walls were used as a method to communicate information; the 'wall media' as Ali Al-Khalili referred to it in his research on the Palestinian media. Usually if I want to raise an issue, the first step is to do the necessary planning before leaking the information, which entails setting an agenda.

Everybody talks about the corruption but nobody appears to have any proof. Who did the 'agenda setting' when the famous report on corruption in the PNA was raised? This report was distributed by a commission that is related to the PNA, so the CSOs remained neutral in this case. One day the President's Counselor for Economic Issues, Khaled Sallam, was asked to come to the PLC as three quarters of its members were furious because

they believed that he was the main person involved in the corruption through Al-Bahr Co., which is backed by the PNA. After two sessions with Sallam, the PLC members apologized for the 'misunderstanding'. Why did this happen? Not because they believed that he is the purest human being, but because they did not do their homework and because the CSOs did not do theirs and supply it to them. It transpired that all the information in the possession of the PLC was incorrect. Of course, there is also the possibility that Sallam is 'pure' and simply has a 'different view' when it comes to economic policy, which does not mean that he is corrupt. Whether he is corrupt or not, the important thing to remember is that if the homework is not done well, one cannot come up with satisfactory results.

If one wants to discuss education from the point of view of the curriculum and the competence of teachers, for example, and there are no interest groups dealing with this issue, what can he do? Taking the example of the 3rd grade book; to complain to the office of the President, who is also in charge of the Ministry of Education, will not help much. Either the people at the ministry will try to convince you to reconsider your objections, ignore your complaint entirely, or perhaps listen to the complaint but then fail to follow it up. One of the few options, under such circumstances, is to create an interest group to defend the issue.

Participant: There are other options, such as getting a well-known journalist to write an article about the issue in the press.

Dr. Khatib: This depends. Usually, reports that contain facts and figures and the opinions of experts and quotes by people who have been affected in one way or another by the issue in question are far more likely to have an impact on readers than opinion pieces. For you as receptors, the author of an opinion piece or a letter to the editor might be right or wrong, whereas a press report, backed by experts and information, will usually be accepted as the truth. Even then, it we decide to raise a certain issue, there is still the problem of raising funds to cover the costs of transportation, etc., and of finding enough people willing to devote time and energy to changing the situation.

An interest group that aims at improving the education level has to decide upon the best method to raise this issue, as well as the tools available/ needed in order to exert pressure on decision-makers. Then it must decide which decision-makers to address - which in this case would be the Ministry of Education, the PLC, and maybe some experts in the field who could lend their support - in order to convince them of the importance of its point of view. As an individual one will never be able to exert the same influence as an expert in the field, which is why it is important to gain the support of as many experts as possible.

The most instrumental medium to influence the general policy concerning education and gain the maximum support for our endeavors is the media. If the support of the public is won the PLC will most likely want to go along as it has become an issue about which the public feels strongly. But how can we use the media? How can you convince a journalist who is not particularly interested in a certain issue to tackle it, bearing in mind that you are the ones with information?

If an interest group has funds in the amount of US$1,000, it has to consider whether it would be worth while to spend US$500 of this on building good relations by inviting some journalists to dinner in order to convince them of the importance of a certain issue and whether it should give one of them $200 or so in order to do some preliminary research on the issue. The money could also be invested in a brochure to be distributed to the general public. In other words, one has to constantly think: "What is the most efficient way to influence people?"

Participant: Yesterday, Qatari *Al-Jazeera TV* spoke about the Palestinian prisoners - unfortunately, our own media has failed to cover this issue in a satisfactory manner – which means that the media of another country is actually serving as a pressure group in an indirect way.

Dr. Khatib: Right, but the situation here is different; we have three main newspapers, one public TV and one radio station, all of which are financed or influenced by the PNA. How, then, can we find other methods to influence the people in order to change the situation, taking into account that the newspapers rarely deal with issues that affect our daily lives? The transportation system in Ramallah, for example, the fact that someone died because of a medical error, or the mishandling of public funds; these are all examples of the kind of things that are not being dealt with as they should be.

Participant: Is it difficult to form an interest group?

Dr. Khatib: There are today in Palestine more than 800 NGOs that are all backed by foreign funders, many of which have good objectives. We have pluralism in the media to a far greater degree than most of the Arab countries, but the situation is the same as under the occupation: some are prepared to involve themselves in politics, to struggle and to be imprisoned, and there are others who are not prepared to pay the price. It is still a question of principles and of asking the question: "Am I prepared to accept responsibility for my actions?" Ideally, the CSOs should balance the power of the PNA by using as a base the different types of media.

3 INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Rami G. Khouri[1]

A. THE NATURE OF INFORMATION

Information that is transmitted via the mass media and communications channels can be divided into different kinds of materials:

1. *Factual Information* - facts, figures, statistics, and other information designed only to increase the knowledge of the target audience. This material is usually free of values; it tries to report or inform, without ideological bias or political aims on the part of the communicator, e.g. information in a statistical yearbook or an encyclopedia, or a weather report.

2. *News* - anything that is new and/or important and thus is useful for people to know. News must include the element of being 'new', whether a new event that happened yesterday, or new information about an event that happened in the past (e.g., new information about who killed Abu Jihad or John Kennedy). News must be important or relevant to the life of the audience; being 'new' is not enough, i.e., a new tree planted in someone's garden is not news, but a new forest planted in a neighborhood playground is news, because it impacts on the quality of life of the community, or takes away parking spaces, or attracts wild animals.

3. *Entertainment* - anything designed primarily to amuse, please, or entertain people, without necessarily giving them information or news. Entertainment is the fastest growing segment of the mass media and communications (mass-comm) industry. Most kinds and forms of communication must be entertaining in order to catch the attention of the audience, especially today when people have so many sources of information at their fingertips.

4. *Opinion or Ideology* - anything designed to offer ideas and opinions, and usually intended to convince someone else of your views or positions. This kind of material is often part of a political contest or argument, or part of advocacy efforts for a viewpoint or a cause. Opinion/ideology does not have to be aggressive; it can be low-key and soft, but is always designed to give information in order to change the mind or viewpoint of the target audience.

---

[1] Rami G. Khouri is a journalist and publisher with 30 years of experience in the Middle East and Europe/North Africa.

5. *Attacking or Accusatory Material* - material that is aggressive against someone else or in defense of your own position, usually designed to discredit someone else or to hurt their credibility in the context of a situation of conflict. This kind of material is dramatic, action-packed, and aggressive, designed to create controversy or evoke a reaction.

6. *Public Relations* - any communication process designed to create an image or evoke a favorable sentiment amongst the target audience. Public relations material may not always aim to have the target audience react by taking an action, but instead it may only want to create a positive impression of you amongst the audience (or sometimes the aim of PR is to change a negative impression into a positive one, i.e. if an airline company uses PR after one of its planes crashes to give the public information and to inform them of plans to compensate the dead and wounded).

B.   THE FORM OF INFORMATION

Information can be transmitted to the target audience by many different means, or in many different forms, such as:

1. *Electronic and direct mass media*: television, radio, film, video, audio cassette, theater, music.

2. *Printed materials*: newspapers, magazines, newsletters, books, leaflets, brochures, flyers, educational materials.

3. *Word of mouth*: speeches, lectures, talks at religious or tribal gatherings, gossip, rumors, jokes.

4. *Electronic personal media*: e-mail, Internet, beepers, cellular and normal telephones, voice mail.

5. *Public spaces and actions*: street signs, billboards, painting on walls, T-shirts and hats, street banners, flags, balloons, marches, sit-down strikes, demonstrations, charity walks.

C.   THE TYPE OF INFORMATION

You can communicate to your target audience using several types of information, which are a combination of the above two lists:

1. *Newsy materials*: news stories, television reports, and other news reports that are generated by journalists.

2. *Light features*: stories in the press that are entertaining but also about a serious subject, such as a feature story about children who are learning three languages at once in their sports classes. Light features are generated by journalists, but often at your suggestion or using materials you provide them.

3. *Paid advertising*: material in the press that you pay for (unlike the first two above which are not paid for). Paid advertisements can sometimes look like news stories or features.

4. *Personal opinion or testament*: people with respect and credibility in society can be used to spread a message, and that message will be better received than if it were offered by someone who is not well known, i.e., Haidar Abdul Shafi is more credible as a communicator about peacemaking for Palestine than a Palestinian student in Europe.

5. *Public events*: special events can be created to attract the attention of the news media, including press conferences, marches, political action, lectures, and other events that are used as a vehicle to transmit your message to the target audience.

D.   HOW TO COMMUNICATE SUCCESSFULLY AND TO SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO YOUR AUDIENCE

Which combination of the above types and forms of communication should you use to send your message successfully? This depends on

a)   your goal,

b)   your audience, and

c)   the material and human resources available to you to send your message.

The most successful combination of communication types and means will be that which is

a)   most able to reach your target audience,

b)   is most credible to your target audience, and

c)   will achieve your intended goal.

1. Setting your goal(s):

In designing any mass-comm effort, you should first decide what results you wish to achieve, and set some primary and final goals. The primary goals will include things such as: Do you wish to inform your audience? entertain them? Change their mind? Make them sad, angry, curious, or happy or some other emotion? Get their attention? Shock them? Make them sympathetic to, or proud of, your cause? Make them critical of a third party? Once you decide your primary goal, you can then determine how to achieve it, by choosing the most appropriate mass-comm channels, but you also should decide your final goals. For example, if your primary goal is to make your audience feel proud of your organization's work for the national development of Palestine, your final goal might be to generate financial donations to your work or to have people become members of your organization. Final goals are those things that you want to happen as a result of the communication process, such as people spending money to buy something or to donate to a cause, taking political action (voting or

protesting), supporting you verbally or emotionally, etc. It is important from the start to determine how you can measure progress towards attaining your primary and final goals – otherwise you will not know if your mass-comm efforts have been successful or not. You can measure success or failure by using polls, surveys, focus group discussions, and other means such as counting new donations or members of an organization, new customers, inquiries received, visitors to a center, etc. It is always important to develop a measurement system that can tell you if any changes in the behavior of your target audience were caused by your mass-comm efforts or by other efforts. For example, you might launch a promotion strategy for your organization and find that your membership increased by 25 percent in six months, but was this due to your strategy or to other reasons that had nothing to do with your efforts (a new president, a new project you launched, etc.)?

2. Determining what is credible to your audience:

Messages sent to a target audience will prove to be credible or non-credible depending on the following factors:

a) *The state of mind of your audience*: a happy audience cheering for a football team will not be receptive to sad messages about poor children; a sad audience depressed about economic stress will not be receptive to messages asking for financial donations. Know the state of mind of your audience before you send them a message, and when you do send a message make sure it is in line with your audience's state of mind.

b) *The quality of your information or message*: the message you send must be accurate and factual, and relevant to your audience. If you send information that is not true, your audience will not listen to you the next time you try to reach them. Moreover, if your information is not relevant to them, they will not even start to listen to your message in the first place, e.g., do not send a message about the demolition of Palestinian houses to American opera singers, but do send it to some American International Law experts.

c) *The quality of the messenger*: the person or institution sending the message must be credible and appropriate, or else the audience will not bother even to listen or receive the message. A message about the dangers of nuclear radiation will not be well received if it is sent from the headquarters of a football team, but it will be credible if it comes from the physics department of a university. Make sure the messenger is credible before you send any message.

d) *The context in which the message is delivered*: the medium or channels you use to send a message should be appropriate. If you want to raise awareness in Israel about the problem of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, you would do better to get information into the Israeli Hebrew press than into the Palestinian Arabic press.

4 THE ROLE AND POWER OF THE MASS MEDIA

Rami G. Khouri

Our world today is increasingly driven by a combination of information and entertainment values, and these are both promoted by the explosion of different means of communication, especially electronic communication such as satellite TV and Internet. This means the market for information is extremely competitive and is characterized by the following:

1. *Overload on the audience*: Most people today, even in many developing countries, have access to scores of information sources in their homes and offices, including television, radio, internet and others. The audience is over-loaded with options, so if you want to catch someone's attention via the mass media you have to produce quality material that is deemed appropriate to use by journalists and deemed worth reading or viewing by the audience.

2. *Overload on the mass media:* Most journalists are flooded with sources of information, press releases, story ideas and requests for coverage. This means that if you want to attract a journalist's or editor's attention and get coverage in their publication or on their channel, you have to produce quality information and PR materials that are credible and that catch the press's attention.

3. *Overload on funders and advertisers:* Those people who pay money to the mass media or to non-governmental organizations - advertisers and funders - are also flooded with more requests than they can meet. So it is critically important for NGOs today to produce high quality work if they wish to attract funds from donors or support from companies that have the option to spend their money on direct advertising and promotion.

In view of the above, it is important for NGOs and others who wish to use the mass media and other mass-comm channels to stress quality and professionalism in the work they do, especially in their information/promotion work. The use of quality, professional materials and techniques will generate an audience for you, which in turn means credibility, financial support, capacity to influence public opinion or public actions, and thus power to change society for the better. (However, some groups in society, especially private firms, shun the mass media and public exposure, and prefer to work

quietly. Others use the mass media in a negative way, mainly to prevent the public from having negative views of them or their work. These are both valid options, but most NGOs do not fall into this category, and instead want to use mass-comm channels to generate publicity, goodwill, funding and support.)

THE PALESTINIAN AND WIDER CONTEXTS

NGOs and others in Palestine who wish to use mass-comm channels to achieve their goals have to recognize the four overlapping contexts in which they operate: the Palestinian, Israeli, Arab and global contexts. Each is characterized by different realities, and needs different technical and political approaches.

The fact is that the Palestine issue remains a major global issue, often in the news and attracting the attention of governments and top world leaders on a routine basis. This means that you have the potential to use the high visibility of the Palestine issue to attract the attention and support of many audiences around the region and the world. However, at the same time there is a general perception around the world that the Palestine issue is on the way to being resolved through the Oslo Accords. This means that many potential supporters might lose interest and move their focus to other areas of the world. The result of this situation is that Palestinian organizations have to work harder to use mass-comm and other channels to maintain worldwide interest in our issue, and to stress that there is greater than ever need for international support for Palestinian NGOs because of the peculiar situation created by the peace-making process.

Using the mass media and communication channels in the four contexts mentioned above requires a clear understanding of each one, and how it works within its own political culture and national values. The Palestinian mass-comm sector is fragmented, very local in its orientation, highly personalized, and also both traditional and very new. The Israeli sector is highly political and commercial, with few personal dimensions. The Arab sector is a combination of two very different extremes: tightly controlled national institutions that mainly reflect the official views, and free-market and entertainment-based private media channels that reflect a combination of state and private views.

The world mass-comm sector is global, market-driven, and increasingly based on entertainment values, even in the news business. These four very different contexts require different approaches, and each can serve a very different purpose. Palestinian NGOs seeking mass-comm coverage must first identify their target audience and the intended results they wish to achieve, and then decide which channels best meet those aims. Goals will differ widely, from NGOs that seek funding and members, to NGOs that want to educate families and students, to private firms that want to sell their products, to cultural groups that want to promote social values, to government institutions that want to project a policy line or political viewpoint.

In order to make best use of the different mass media channels, you should keep in mind what the media themselves see as their primary role, which differs in the above cases. In general, the role of the mass media in global society has been evolving over the past century towards the following goals and duties:

1. The media informs the public, provides information and amusement, generates political ideas, mobilizes political and social action groups, and generally helps to shape the public policy agenda and priorities.

2. The media plays a role of political accountability and checks-and-balances, keeping an eye on public officials and institutions and constantly challenging them via reports, interviews, debates, etc.

3. The media can sometimes play the role of a direct political actor, such as happened in the Watergate or Monica Lewinsky cases in the United States, when revelations by the press sparked political crises and legal actions, or as happens in the Middle East sometimes when the press reveals political actions or plans that impact on the political scene.

4. The mass media also plays an accountability role *vis-à-vis* the private sector and NGOs, reporting on their activities and making sure that they do not harm the public wellbeing. In view of the above realities, it is important to be able to make use of mass-comm channels effectively but without exaggerating the power of the mass media. In the end, the media is a reflection of society. Very rarely can the mass media actually make people change their minds or their views instantly.

The media primarily reinforce existing views that people hold. This means that you should carefully define what goal you wish to achieve through the mass media. Usually this goal will be primarily informational - i.e., you will want to inform people and give them facts or information about your work or your cause. You should not expect the media to bring about major or rapid changes in public attitudes. The media is best used to provide factual information in a steady, credible manner, and that knowledge over time helps to change people's attitudes.

NGOs often use the media without precise goals or targets. Often people send press releases or hold press conferences without having sufficiently 'newsy' information to give the press, and this results in poor coverage, or even in situations where some journalists do not respond the next time they are approached by the same NGO. It is important to have a clear, realistic aim when you use the mass media, such as: specific facts to be disseminated, a project announced, an appeal for money or support, introducing a new person or activity, etc. If you do not have newsworthy information, you should not try to use the media to spread your message via free news coverage, but instead use paid advertising or other channels of communication.

Finally, the impact of the mass media should be monitored, so that you can determine what kind of and how much impact the media has on people and society. It might prove more useful for your organizational goals to use other communication means, such as religious, social or tribal groups, the school system, political parties, the government agencies, or other NGOs.

5   MEDIA ETHICS

Dr. Said Zeedani[1]

John Merrill, in his book *Legacy of Wisdom*, tries to depict different portraits of journalists or media people who exhibit different moral qualities. He discusses the different theories and theorists and their points of view related to this issue, from Plato, Socrates and Confucius until Iris Murdoch.

The constant and recurring question is as follows: What are the values, virtues or principles (professional, ethical and intellectual ones) that a journalist or a media person should have? And what are those that should direct or govern his work?

Examples:

1. Plato

The journalist is supposed to sacrifice his individuality for the sake of the group, for its own good and its progress. His real freedom consists of helping society in achieving the common good and justice as determined by the philosopher-kings (Plato in his *Republic*). There is no place in Plato's *Republic* for any other kind of journalist and there is no place for any kind of poetry other than that which praises the virtues of the wise people and the gods, and that leads to the cohesion of a society that is governed by the philosophers who know what virtue and justice are and who aim at promoting virtuous and just behavior.

2. Machiavelli

Machiavelli exchanges ethical/non-ethical principles with another kind - effective/non-effective - and brings out the role of exploitative journalism that concentrates upon serving its own interests, its own success, its own freedom, its own supremacy and its own value; since the end justifies the means, the standard of judging, both in the case of the governor or the journalist, is success!

3. Voltaire

Voltaire asked the journalist to be skeptical and not to believe anything without checking and investigating. From this standpoint, he defended the

---

freedom of speech and expression in its widest form and sought the abolishment of censorship.

Rationality, freedom, skepticism, shying out from the masses and keeping away from religious fanaticism characterize the image of the journalist that was drawn by Voltaire.

4. Kant

Kant confirmed the importance and the priority of sticking to ethical principles. A journalist should act according to ethical principles and should not aim at acting only in his own best interests or those of his group, party or religion. He should consider it his duty to act according to the principles that could become universal laws that are binding on everyone. He advocated freedom in its positive sense and not in its negative one.

5. Edmund Barke (the Conservative)

Barke confirmed the importance of the social responsibility of journalism that pushes the journalist to work for and participate in achieving social, political and national stability. This requires respecting the traditions, the inherited values and the public ethics and morals. Following this orientation, the public ethics and morals and the ethical principles become like constraints that restrict the freedom of the journalist and of journalism.

6. John Stuart Mill (the Liberal)

Through the freedom of speech and expression in their widest meaning, man becomes an ethical and progressive human being capable of finding the truth and achieving happiness while advocating pluralism and tolerance.

As to the general good versus individualism, a good journalistic deed like any governmental deed or decision is any deed that leads to or aims at benefiting the public good and thereby results in happiness amongst the largest number of people, even at the expense of others.

7. Iris Murdoch

A journalist should repress his selfish drives and should have an interest in the issue itself but the least possible emotional involvement. The effort should focus on finding the truth without arousing sentiments/emotions. A journalist should not resort to stories that invoke the emotions.

MEDIA IN A NON-DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

1. Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, there are official guidelines on how to arrange and prioritize the official news on the television, which also apply to the press; reports about the King followed by news concerning the country followed by news concerning the princes, etc. Even when it comes to issues related to sport, they have special guidelines pertaining to the order in which they should come. It is, therefore, a case of very strict censorship and every

journalist being obliged to stick to the rules defined by the rulers. Moreover, in the streets, the morality police are always active. There is also censorship of all the newspapers and books that come from outside as well as all local publications. The only source of information is the authorities themselves; the press and the media say what the authorities want them to say and do what the system wants them to do, and the margin of freedom on this or that issue is determined by the latter. Any alternative source of information is excluded. The system, which is also responsible for financing the media and the press, completely monopolizes all information.

A 'good' journalist in this case is the one who helps to keep the system stable. He is also the one who sticks to the moral and religious values as defined by the regime.

2.   The Soviet System

The journalist in this case is a civil servant and should belong to the ruling party and respond to the challenge of anti-Communist propaganda. There is strict censorship by the State, which owns the press. The journalist should be a member in a trade union that is a part of the governing party. The State is also the sole source of information and there is no alternative media or source of information; alternative media is illegal and subject to persecution. Certainly, there is a margin of freedom in the case of some issues that do not interest the system. This does not mean that the journalists are not in harmony with the governing system and with its priorities and objectives. In this case, we can see the role of the media as a disseminator of propaganda for serving the existing system and regime.

3.   Iraq

These days, the situation does not differ greatly from that in the Soviet Union. There is no place for a journalist who criticizes the system or who does not conform to its priorities and its policies.

MEDIA IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

One of the major principles of the democratic process is the enlightened understanding displayed by the citizens who participate in one way or another in taking the collective decisions that are binding for the whole society. This enlightened understanding requires obtaining the information from its different sources: from the governmental source as well as from the other alternative sources. This implies the availability of such alternative information, which is one of the pillars of a democratic system. It is also the duty of the journalist to try and put his finger on the pulse of the people, so that the governor/government knows what the people feel and think about the different issues. If this alternative information is not available, the journalist should look for it. If he does not do this, then he will be, whether he likes it or not, at the mercy of the authority and in a way 'used' by the system for its own purposes because of his laziness.

There are various kinds of decisions that have ethical and religious implications. Amongst these are the following:

- Reporting something that happened without your playing a part in it or being a/the reason for its taking place or its development. Maybe one side or another would make use of you in order to reach the goals that they have in mind. There is a difference between your role in covering an issue or a situation and fabricating an event where your presence was partly responsible for it taking place.

- What are the issues that you write about? That you try to ignore? That you hide? What are the priorities? Why are they important? What criteria do you use? These are decisions that are sometimes forced by the events, but the media usually tends to select and to impose its own priorities. The priorities as the people see them do not always match the priorities as seen by the journalist, and a journalist should do his best to reflect the priorities of the people, rather than his own or those of the group or party to which he belongs. This requires restraining any bias in order to report a balanced story that reflects or expresses to the greatest extent possible the different interests, competing points of view, and positions of the different parties in a struggle. The role of a journalist is to transmit the event, not to make it, color it or deform it, and this demands honesty and moral and intellectual integrity.

- Professionalism/Ethics: To what extent should a journalist expose himself to danger in order to have something to report? Nobody would ask him to endanger his life in order to reach the information or its source, but he has to be more courageous than the average person and display a greater readiness to take risks. A journalist is like a soldier in this respect, but it is not his duty to become a hero.

  To what extent is it permissible for a journalist to intervene in the lives of other people in order to know about the event or its source? The intimate life and relationships of people are not generally a part of the interests of a journalist, and intervening in other people's lives is much more legitimate if the concerned person is a public figure. If President Clinton cheats on his wife, then this is not an issue that concerns him alone. If a Congressman is beating his wife, then it is not an issue that concerns him alone. If a representative of the people has a secret meeting with people from the enemy side, then it is not an issue that concerns him alone. So, the margin of intervention becomes bigger once the person is an official or when he represents the people. The rights of the people, when they are absolute are like trump cards, and the journalist should not violate them without asking for permission.

THE JOURNALIST, THE TEACHER, THE JUDGE

A democratic journalist is not a teacher or a judge but he has a lot of things in common with each of them:

- Like the teacher and the judge, he needs protection in order to perform his duty in an acceptable and reasonable way.
- Like the teacher and the judge, he should be righteous, impartial, objective and trained to do his job properly.
- Like the teacher and the judge, he is vulnerable to bribery and to seduction and therefore he should be cautious and on the alert.

However, contrary to the teacher, a journalist does not deal with a group of people under his tutelage and contrary to a judge, a journalist is not expected to settle disputes between two sides. Moreover, a journalistic conviction is not binding. Common between all of them is the set of values that they are supposed to have: honesty, righteousness, objectivity, impartiality and the ability to resist bribery or seduction.

The teacher, the journalist and the judge play an important role in the lives of the people, and the issues of honesty and moral integrity are very important for each. All three are capable of harming others, which is why they must take extra care to be cautious and sensitive.

If the media is the fourth branch of power after the executive, the legislative and the judiciary branches, then this puts a lot of responsibility upon the journalist. The journalist, like the executive branch, can violate somebody's privacy, his rights or his reputation and therefore he is subject to the rule of law. He can accuse, judge and condemn and that is why he should be accountable, controlled and judged in the event that he slanders or injures the reputation of someone, violating his rights. He is like a watchdog that never sleeps and that wakes everybody, but he should always be independent and display as much impartiality as possible.

It is very important that sufficient and effective controlling devices be put in place to control the various activities of the different people working in the field of media - the journalist in the field, the editor, analysts, the editorial board, the owners, trade unions, etc. - because the product – the published story or report - is important to the people.

CASE STUDIES

The Issue of the American Hostages in Iran in the Early 1980s:

The press put this issue at the top of its list of priorities and in so doing, put the American President and government in a difficult situation that might have been easier had the media not been there.

On the other hand, the American media was very clearly biased against Iran and against Islam, exactly in the same way that the Israeli media is biased towards the interests of the State of Israel and against the other side of the equation.

If the journalist is generally biased towards his country and his society, to what extent is this partially legitimate if we take into consideration values such as professional and personal honesty and righteousness and a desire to serve truth and humanity?

A journalist cannot - and maybe should not even attempt to - isolate and dissociate himself from his national and ethnic identity. He is the son or daughter of this society, this country and this civilization. There is a certain degree of bias that I think is difficult to get rid of without a special intellectual leap, but that cannot be expected from everybody. Nevertheless, it should be an identity that is revisable and subject to criticism.

- *Edward Said's Book Covering Islam (1981)*

The American media acted as a source of information on Islam. The image of Islam that is drawn by the American media is threatening, and by concentrating on this image, the media is promoting a prejudiced ideology without any resistance and without reserve. In general, the media coverage is from this point of view harmonious with the authority and this gives it strength and presence.

The thing that the media did not succeed in doing is to surmount or reduce the cultural barriers and distances that make knowing 'others' possible. The result of this is the victory of the trend that does not make an effort to know and understand Islam, but which wants to impose its own views on Islam. The same applies to the Israeli media coverage of the Palestinian question. The question is as follows: Should we put the mind in the service of the authority or in the service of the truth, the society and basic humane and ethical principles?

- *The Case of the Bar-On Trial in Israel*

This is a case that could have led to the end of the current government and the career of the Israeli Prime Minister. It led to a lot of tension between the executive branch and the media, the intervention of the judicial system and the legal advisor of the Israeli Government. The media in this case was really daring and the media coverage was justified. There was not any slander or fabrication. The correspondent implicated in this case was daring and risked a lot, as a result of which she was threatened, but this did not deter her from continuing the investigation. She did this because the public had the right to know the truth of the matter, but she also fulfilled her duty by doing everything she could to protect her sources of information.

- *The Case of the Journalists Maher Al-Alami and Daoud Kuttab*

The journalist Maher Al-Alami was punished by being fired from the newspaper for which he worked because he refused to put a photograph of the President on the first page as he felt that to do so was not a professional duty.

Daoud Kuttab on the other hand was put in prison for a few days because Educational TV - where he is the director - was broadcasting the deliberations that take place in the PLC.

In both cases, the battle to have a professional media was complicated by the resistance of the authority and the weakness of the legal system and the journalists' trade union.

CONDITIONS FOR THE FLOURISHING OF A DEMOCRATIC MEDIA AND PRESS

A democratic media is one that is committed to the values of democracy and to the principles on which democracy both as a form of government and as a way of life is based.

The duty of the media is to provide information and analysis in order to enrich the continuing public debate and dialogue on all levels. This kind of dialogue is necessary for enlightened understanding, which in turn enables the taking of democratic decisions that can be justified, even in front of the opposition.

If the saying 'Knowledge is power' is correct, the thing that guarantees that limits are never exceeded is professional ethics. The ethics of a given profession are not natural and inborn, but rather acquired through the following:

- the appropriate and adequate training and values;
- adequate control;
- an adequate trade union;
- an adequate legal system;
- adequate legislation; and
- adequate orientation.

In the end, the only protection for a journalist, a judge, a teacher or a member of parliament is the protection provided by a public that is convinced that they serve the values and principles that it wants to preserve - values that are always subject to revision and criticism.

6 THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF THE (MASS) MEDIA

Eric Weiner and Lyse Doucet[1]

ERIC WEINER

I want to speak a little bit in general about what it is like to be a journalist for a quality international news organization, and then go on to how you can use us, since we are using you and it works both ways. Before coming here three years ago, I spent a few years in India, and the first thing that struck me about working here is that there is so much more demand from news agencies for stories than was the case in India, a country of at least 980 million people. This huge amount of foreign interest – particularly from the US and Britain - means that the foreign correspondents are kept extremely busy. It also means that if you have a story to tell, you are probably more likely to get it on the air than you would be if it had something to do with India.

If Prime Minister Netanyahu or Yasser Arafat say something that is front-page news for us; if somebody is killed or injured, that is also news; if someone is killed the same day in Miami or Washington, they do not get the same amount of coverage, simply because they were not killed here. Every foreign journalist working here is to some extent overworked; there are way too many stories and not enough time to tell them.

We look at the wires a lot – AP, Reuters, the French News Agency, and UPI to some extent - sometimes too much perhaps, and they act as a sort of guide to what is happening. Yesterday, for example, there was just one story after another flashing across the screen: Prime Minister Netanyahu facing a possible no-confidence vote in the Knesset, a Palestinian man being critically injured by Israelis who shot him in Abu Dis, the unprecedented shootout in Nablus between Palestinian police and Fatah members, and the everyday clashes in Ramallah between Palestinian protestors and Israeli soldiers over the prisoner issue. Then, of course, we had for the US audience in particular this disagreement between the Israelis and the Americans about Clinton's trip and the possibility that his flying into Gaza could be perceived as American endorsement of an independent Palestinian state. The fact that I work for a US organization means that I was focusing a little more on that story than Lyse was for the BBC.

We try to focus on one story per day if we can, as past experience has taught us that trying to deal with too many issues at one time can leave the listener somewhat confused.

---

[1] Eric Weiner is the Bureau Chief for the National Public Radio in Jerusalem; Lyse Doucet is a correspondent for the BBC World Service in Jerusalem.

Another challenge is to be balanced, according to our mandate, which can be frustrating. I get a lot of e-mail every day, much of which is critique and blame for not having covered a story fairly or accusations that I am either an 'Israeli agent' or a 'Palestinian agent'. If we receive an equal number of such e-mails - meaning that we have angered each side equally – it is a good indication that we are doing our job well.

With regard to how you can tell your story through us, I think people who wonder how we decide what is and what is not a story are often under the impression that we have committees, extensive discussions and computer-analyzed reports. It is really not like that, but more along the lines of a conversation between the correspondent and his editor back in Washington on main topics or subjects for feature stories.

It probably helps to think like a journalist when you present us with an idea for a story, though you should bear in mind that a certain issue of interest to you does not necessarily qualify it as a story. Controversial issues tend to get on the air more than those that are not controversial, and I always respect people in public relations or public affairs who say, "To be honest this is controversial but here is our side of the story." A story does not have to be controversial, however, it can simply be innovative, something new and different, but you must tell us why it is new or different.

Always try to be frank; we tend to discount groups with 'hidden' agendas, which are actually quite obvious, and would much rather that they be up front about their agenda, saying, for example, "We represent Palestinian refugees, I am going to be honest about that, but I think this is a good story." Journalists tend to respect that kind of honesty.

It is also important that you present the story to us on a human level and not rely on facts and figures. Especially in the broadcast media, we look for the personal story: somebody speaking into the microphone, not an official, not an analyst, but a real person. Note, however, that if you come to us and say, "I know of a person who is really suffering or benefiting or whatever," we expect the person to be as you present them and are not going to be very happy if we discover that they are not.

To wrap up, there is a huge interest in the story here, with at least 300 foreign correspondents based in Jerusalem alone. We have to justify our existence, which makes it easier for you to get through to us. The down side of that is that we are saturated with information and it is your job to distinguish yourself with honesty and be selective in the ideas that you present.

LYSE DOUCET

I started working in West Africa and then worked mainly in the Islamic World: in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, and in Iran. Immediately before coming here, I was in Jordan, and it was from there that I came to the center of the universe, Jerusalem.

I always say to people that it is a privilege to be able to be here because the Arab-Israeli conflict is a conflict that matters worldwide. It is a very compelling human story because as much as we talk about the peace process, further troop redeployments, and percentages, at the bottom of it is a story that all of you live day in day out. As journalists, it is our task to translate

developments here in terms of a television piece of anywhere between one minute thirty seconds to three minutes, or a documentary, or radio piece, or, in the case of newspaper journalists, into articles. We have an incredible amount of material, but that can actually be a burden.

I think we have to say that this conflict has a special character; there are not only hundreds of foreign correspondents based here to cover it, but media is actually becoming part of the story. Why? Because Israel is led by a prime minister whose whole philosophy of politics and conflict comes down to his well-developed view on how to present this to the world. His great phrase is that, "It's not that a picture is worth a thousand words, but that a word is worth a thousand pictures," in other words, it is not that Israel's policy is wrong, we just have to explain it better. Fortunately, what this means to people in television is that Mr. Netanyahu is extremely accessible, and hence the criticisms of some like Sa'eb Ereikat who accuses Mr. Netanyahu of being a media lord. The Palestinians, I have to say, have slowly struggled to catch up and we are usually successful in gaining access to Palestinian policymakers, Palestinians from all walks of life, and presenting their point of view. That does not mean, however, that we do not sometimes face problems: the Palestinian Authority is still, after all, a fledgling and nascent authority with underdeveloped structures.

Even Jordan, an established state, is still struggling to keep up with Israel. I was there during the peace negotiations between Israel and Jordan and I remember the frustration of the journalists because they could never find out what was happening except by following the Israeli media. When King Hussein finally agreed to see foreign journalists based there, someone said "We need a foreign ministry spokesman," while someone else remarked, "Israel has a spokesman for social affairs, for politics, for agriculture, for this and for that, a myriad of spokesmen; why don't we have the same?" One of the princesses said, "Oh, but then we would become like Israel" and King Hussein muttered and said, "Yes, that would be normalization." If you want to beat the Israelis then you have to try to beat them at their own game by providing as many good quality spokesmen.

Television pieces are usually short and can be very unfair, even if we bring in a Palestinian and an Israeli viewpoint. Sometimes, a Palestinian will say, "That's not good, the Palestinian doesn't speak very good English, and the Israeli speaks great English. Why did you use this Palestinian?" It is true: if you have only 20 seconds the image matters a great deal, and if your message is conveyed by someone who does not speak good English, then of course the Israelis may sound more convincing. This is Netanyahu's great strength; he always sounds convincing.

I remember last year we were doing a story, a summary of the year in Israel and the Palestinian areas, and we decided to do it through the closure, in other words, by getting an Israeli employer who was affected by the closure, one who had a rather decent relationship with his employees, and a Palestinian worker. We interviewed the Palestinian as he went across the Erez checkpoint at five in the morning and the Israeli as he was waiting for his worker. Both were interviewed in their own languages, Arabic and Hebrew, and as we were driving along I said to the Palestinian cameraman, who speaks both languages fluently, "How do you think it is going to come across? Did they sound good?" His answer was: "Well, the problem is that the Palestinian had no teeth, so when people watch the piece they're going

to see an Arab talking with no teeth and an Israeli talking with a lovely full set of teeth." The point is that on television, image is everything.

Everyone who works in promotion and public relations tries to promote a certain issue or institute, and the success depends on presenting it well. We are not here to take up the Israeli or the Palestinian cause, we are just here to report; we are not here to make history happen, but to provide a rough draft of history by being the first ones out with the story. This, of course, causes problems, because one side or the other inevitably complains that we have taken the other's side. If, day in day out, Israelis see pictures of Palestinians, wearing the *keffiyeh,* throwing stones, against a mighty Israeli army with their teargas canisters and rubber-coated steel bullets, it is only a matter of time before a rightwing group will tell us, "Oh, you are pro-Palestinians, Nazis, anti-Semites, because you are always presenting a picture of the Palestinians as weak and helpless." My response is to say, "Look, I didn't make those clashes happen, but I have to cover them, and if every day, day in day out there is such an image of David and Goliath, then that is the way it is."

DISCUSSION

Eric Weiner: Our jobs involve much more than covering violence; we try to do other stories, on Palestinian cinema, culture, or social issues. Perhaps we are not quite as powerful as some people may think, but we do have the power to present a different kind of image, or at least of making people sit up and say, "Hey, I never knew that the Palestinians had mobile cinemas, or great universities, or do this and that, etc." Even though journalists like to think that the world revolves around them, the real truth is that they do not have as much power as they would like to have. A good example of that was Bosnia, where the majority of journalists were very critical of the policies of the Serbs and the Western governments, but did the policies change? No. Television pictures and radio coverage may have caused more government officials to send food to the starving in Ethiopia and Sudan, but they did not stop the starvation nor its reoccurrence. It is only natural that some of you come to us and say, "Why don't you tell your policy-makers what is happening and try to change the Palestinian reality? You invade our privacy, and every time a member of our family dies from Israeli bullets or teargas you interview us, and what does it change? Nothing." That is because our power is rather limited.

Nobody would turn down a good story, but what exactly is a good story? I believe that at the end of the day, all of us – whether we are American, Palestinian, or Israeli – like to laugh, to cry and to hear a good tale. In the city of Bethlehem, for example, there are all kinds of great stories waiting to be told, certainly as we approach the year 2000. If we knew more about what was happening in Nablus, we would possibly go there more often, too. When the troop redeployment was on in Jenin, for example, it was an opportunity to go there - though in the middle of the night – even to cover just one story. Often what we lack is people who can tell the story well, people who have been intimately involved in the conflict.

With regard to the peace talks, every time a new round begins, we kind of sigh and say, "How are we going to cover it this time? What new story can we tell?" and if a journalist is tired and lacking in interest, it shows in the

piece, so we have to find new angles. For example, the fact that you have 100,000 pounds from the British Council and are going to buy 50,000 pieces of paper and would like us to do a story about how this is going to help school children is not particularly interesting, but if you explain why it is going to make a huge difference, saying, for example, "Did you know that since the closure was imposed we haven't been able to get paper through to Bethlehem and therefore this project will enable the schools to operate?" and we can see that it taps into another story, then we are far more likely to be interested. In short, we should all think about our job more broadly.

Question: How much do you interact with Palestinian journalists, both on a professional and personal level? In working with the foreign media, I have always noticed that they tend to stay with their own people in West Jerusalem and do not know very much about the Palestinian culture and people. You must live amongst the Palestinians in order to find interesting stories. Another problem is that you are obviously under a lot of pressure, which prevents you from listening if I come to you with an interesting story.

A third point is that I often get calls from abroad saying congratulations, because they think the Palestinian problem is almost solved, thanks to what they hear or see in the foreign media. You give them the impression that the withdrawal of Israeli troops from a certain area will mean the end to our problems, and everyone will be happy and live in peace, but it is not like this. We still have problems connected to settlement, Jerusalem, borders, and statehood.

Eric Weiner: Your criticism is justified. One of the reasons behind this problem is the fact that the nature of journalism, especially broadcast journalism, is to simplify. Lyse and I have more time than commercial broadcasters in the US, who have to tell the story in a minute and a half; I usually have three to five or six minutes, but that still means that we have to simplify, and invariably when we simplify, we leave things out, which may be the things that you want us to include.

Another aspect is that we have to report on change, as the *status quo* is usually not news. If the peace process has been frozen for two years, there is a lot of time to deal with the stalemate, whereas if Israeli troops pull out of some small percentage near Jenin, that *is* news, and so we report that.

I do not want to say that we should be positive when there is nothing to be positive about, but after so much negativity, I think the listener in America often feels that the Middle East is a hopeless case and simply does not want to hear about it anymore, which means that whenever there is a small glimmer of hope, we are duty bound to report that. Having said that, I admit that it is possible that we do not always put things in perspective enough.

Lyse Doucet: I want to return to your concern about the fact that without living among the Palestinians, we are unable to comprehend their reality. Living in Jerusalem, one is between Tel Aviv and Ramallah and cannot help but try to understand the heart of both the Israeli and the Palestinian society. It is often a personal decision as to how much journalists socialize with Palestinians or Israelis and how they report. In my case I work at the big television building opposite the bus station, but it is full of Palestinians and Israelis. One does go to Ramallah, to either eat or do stories. In fact, the Israelis often accuse us of doing far more stories about what is happening

to Palestinians because often those are the saddest cases and the ones that speak loudest. Some journalists I know could spend more time trying to understand Palestinian society, but it is not easy to understand a different culture and you should not write us all off and say we are not making an effort.

Eric Weiner: Timing is everything in this business. Right now we are particularly busy because everything is collapsing around us and President Clinton is flying into a mess, so now would not probably be the best time to suggest a story on a paper project in Bethlehem or whatever, but there was a long period during the summer when not much was happening in the peace process and a lot of us were hungry for a good story. Journalists are usually busy but you should keep in mind that there are certain times of the year when they are more receptive to ideas than at others.

Lyse Doucet: You should also know how to pick your target. For example, a few months ago a Palestinian in Bethlehem asked me, "If I want to get something in the Israeli papers, who should I call?" and I said, "Call Amira Hass - she lives in Ramallah, she used to live in Gaza, and she wants to do Palestinian stories." Journalists actually have different audiences and follow different editorial guidance, so if you find someone who has got a lot of time for features, you are more likely to get your story placed than if you give it to someone who is involved mainly in statistics or something. Always be smart about where you pitch your story, and pitch it at the right time.

Tudor Lomas: Another problem is that Palestinians do not always tell the story frankly and clearly. If you talk about a particular issue and say, "Arafat believes that this is a real triumph for the Palestinians," then that is the story the West is going to take. Perhaps a better strategy would be to say, as strongly as you can, "Hang on a minute, we deserve half this bloody land." Do not forget that in the West, it is a new generation that does not know the history. You live it, you feel it, it is part of your life, but kids back in Britain and the US are taught very little history, so you have got to tell them very simple basic truths.

Eric Weiner: I agree, it is very important to put things into terms that the 'average' American, if such a thing exists, can understand. If you do not want to be quoted on the air, just mention Area A, B or C, because we have to explain what Area B is now, which is extremely complicated, so there goes our whole story. You have to use terms that people can understand.

Lyse Doucet: It is not as important for me to ask the questions as it is for you to ask them. If Palestinians start asking, "What about human rights in our so-called democratic society?" then I will start asking too and searching for an answer. I only got involved in a recent documentary on honor killings because a very prominent lawyer in Jordan was taking it up as a cause and trying to change the legal system, and a very prominent lawyer here was trying to change the social system; it was their question, not mine.

Eric Weiner: With regard to the coverage of human rights issues, we have a unique situation here in that on the one hand the Palestinians have suffered greatly at the hands of the Israelis, to put it mildly, and on the other, they are now suffering at the hands of their own people and government. This is a story we foreign journalists do see now and then. All of us have talked to people like Bassem Eid, and though there may be no human rights in Palestine, there are certainly a lot of human rights groups and a lot of

information. LAW, for example, is pretty reliable and does not embellish the facts with opinions. I think that we are doing okay in trying to tell the story of human rights.

I am sometimes asked about the typical day of a foreign correspondent. In my case, I have a time difference of seven hours with the US, which means the night before I might be working until 11, so I wake at around nine, make coffee and get the newspapers – *Ha'aretz* and *The Jerusalem Post*. I then check my e-mails, which can be quite time consuming as I usually find 20 or so, including a few from my boss saying look into this, look into that, those from the Israeli Government Press Office, which inundates us with e-mails, and some from the Palestinians who seem to be catching up in the e-mail race. Afterwards I look through the wires, then I read the newspapers and may call someone in Gaza to see what is going on. After sifting through all the information, I decide where to go from there; if I do not have to do a story I might follow up on something that happened yesterday or last night, or I might just get out of the office to actually see what is happening on the street.

Rami Khouri: Is one of these sources more useful than the others or do you find that they are all providing the same ideas? Is it best for people to send you an e-mail or send something to the AP about them and hope that you will follow it up?

Eric Weiner: Well, if it gets out on the wires, on AP or Reuters, we assume that they have checked it out a little bit. I personally pay more attention to a wire story than something that is just sent as an e-mail. If a story has made its way into a respected newspaper, I will pay attention. I consider *Ha'aretz* to be a very respectable newspaper, but I would certainly pay less attention to *The Jerusalem Post* because I think that it tends to be a bit biased and the quality of its journalism is not quite as good as other papers. So, it is not just the information, it is the source.

Lyse Doucet: It also depends on the nature of the news. If you get an e-mail overnight from one of the human rights groups saying someone is going to be brought to court or something important is going to happen that day, then you might try to be there. I used to be in close contact with the Birzeit Human Rights Project and did stories on the Gaza students, on the protests, on the prisoners, but then my contact left and now I am only getting e-mails and certainly do not do as much. You get used to dealing with certain people; you know you understand them, and they understand you, and they know when the story is a story.

Eric Weiner: Another important point is that you need to let us know about things that are going to happen, not events that have already happened, especially when you are dealing with the broadcast media, which needs pictures and sound and the drama of an event that is actually happening. If you know there is going to be a demonstration or an event or celebration somewhere and you tell us, we are far more likely to report on it than if we hear about it afterwards.

Question: When you have seven or eight stories all at the same time, how do you decide which ones you are going to cover?

Eric Weiner: Well, unfortunately violence is news, whoever is involved, and the more people are killed, the more it is news. That is one criterion we

use. Political upheaval is next in the criteria of what makes for a story. Yesterday, for example, we had people injured throughout the West Bank, and that was news. We also had Netanyahu perhaps being kicked out of office; had he been kicked out of office, that would have superceded any violence in the West Bank, unless it was on an extremely large scale.

We always try to be fair, although there are many pro-Israeli groups who make the joke that NPR stands for National Palestinian Radio. On the other hand, you probably feel that the Western media is pro-Israeli, in spite of the fact that there are many Israelis who are equally convinced that we are pro-Palestinian. It is true to some extent that Israel is treated with kid gloves, for example, it is never held to the same standards as Iraq when it comes to UN resolutions. I personally think that a picture of Israeli soldiers firing on unarmed Palestinians is still more powerful than any number of words. This is what people will remember and all the PR publicity in the world is not going to compensate for that one picture of Israeli brutality. I try to ensure that there is overall coverage balance; in other words, one story where I make the Palestinians angry, one story where I make the Israelis angry.

It is hard to tell if what we do here has any effect at all. Maybe if journalists were not here there would be no peace process at all. Okay, it has flaws, it is in serious trouble, it is stuck, but there *is* a peace process. How do we judge if we have an effect or not? I think the only way to do that would be to take all the foreign correspondents out of Jerusalem and see what the difference is. We try to take snapshots; a Palestinian is losing his farm near Hebron because the Israelis are building a bypass road for settlements, so we take that picture and show it. It is fact; it is something that is actually happening. A car bomb on the streets of Jerusalem wounds Israelis, so we take that picture and show it. It is fact; it is something that is actually happening. Everybody wants each three-minute story to contain the entire history of the Arab-Israeli conflict! When a tragedy befalls a Palestinian one day we are going to focus on that, and if another tragedy befalls an Israeli the next day, we are going to focus on that, while trying to put things in perspective.

Question: Coming from an NGO, I would like to know: Have you ever contacted an NGO and thought of covering its story, or have you ever been approached by someone from an NGO, asking you to visit their organization, and if you have, were you prepared to listen?

Lyse Doucet: I have worked in places like Pakistan and Africa where one had a closer relationship to the UN and to NGOs, because development was part of the political process, and, aside from that, we had more time to deal with such issues. We also try our best to cover such stories here. Always keep in mind that journalists can get very bored of just covering the same story, day in day out.

Eric Weiner: You cannot really divorce the NGO work from the politics. A classic example is some form of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation, where both sides get together to work towards protecting the environment, for example. That is a nice little story to tell. Of course, there is no guarantee that if you ring me up I am going to do a story at all, and I am certainly not going to do one if it only focuses on your particular organization, but if you say something to get me thinking, something that could tie your story to a larger one, it will make me consider looking into it.

Lyse Doucet: One thing you should remember is that we are eager to humanize our stories, so if you have some information on someone who is affected perhaps more than anyone else by a certain issue, then we are certainly going to appreciate your lead. The important thing is that before you ring us up with your story, take a few seconds to think, "What is the most interesting thing about this particular story?" It is difficult for you because you have to stop being a Palestinian and think about what the rest of the world wants to know, but for a story to be interesting, it has to be human.

Rami Khouri: Is there any way of measuring the impact of having airtime on NPR or BBC and of knowing whether it is more useful for Palestinians to get stories on NPR or to get them into *Ha'aretz*, or *Al-Quds*, or whatever?

Lyse Doucet: It depends on who your audience is. Almost all the interviews that Arafat has done recently have been with the Israeli media. Every time something happens he is on Channel I, on Channel 2, in *Ha'aretz*, because he wants to address the Israeli public.

Rami Khouri: But from your experience in your own institutions, what is the impact of airtime? Do you have examples of stories you have done that have resulted in some political, economic, or personal benefit? Is it useful to use the international media?

Lyse Doucet: It is not something that you can measure. If someone tells you "I heard your story about the Palestinian who was having some problems getting from A to B, and I was really surprised by what I heard" this does not necessarily change policy, even if attitudes change. It is a process of changing little by little, making people think in a different way about a situation. Whenever I hear people who are here on a visit say, "I never realized that getting to school, hospital or work could be so complicated or dangerous", I find myself cringing and thinking, for God's sake, didn't you hear my report?

Eric Weiner: Not all Palestinian issues are big geopolitical issues and I think we probably should do more stories about what every day life is like, how you get to school, and whether you are safe in the streets or have enough money to buy food. It is simple issues like these that need to be addressed.

But as far as measuring the effect of these, other than the type of the story where there's a dying baby somewhere and you cover the story and get flooded with letters and donations and the baby is flown out to London and you can say yes, journalists saved that child's life, it is really hard to know what effect we have. I would like to think, however, that we have some.

Lyse Doucet: You have the advantage that this story is on the air day in day out, and because it is, people have an idea that it is important. Even if people do not really get everything we say, but think from time to time, "Oh my God, it's happening again, isn't this awful?" and the policy-makers say "Oh, we'd better do something," and the constituents write to their members of parliament and say, "For God's sake do something, give them money, or votes, or whatever it is that they need," then that is a very good start. It is really a case of keeping it on the boiler.

Tudor Lomas: You need to remember that even if you are not so good at using the foreign media to get your message across, the fact that the other

side is more experienced in doing so means that you have to fight back. An example from the commercial world will illustrate this: if one particular company starts getting the publicity and coverage, everyone starts to feel like they are the only company offering a particular product or service. As a result, the other companies in the same field will run to follow suit and launch huge publicity and advertising campaigns. Here, for example, the Israelis managed to produce one impressive, lucid spokesman after another, while the foreign journalists were having a terrible time running around trying to get someone who could speak anything more than a few words of English in a reasonably clear manner from the other side.

Question: I want to ask you Lyse, when you do something like the feature on honor killings, which you obviously did for the benefit of a foreign audience, not the Palestinians and the other Arabs, what kind of impact are you trying to achieve?

Lyse: Well, this feature was slightly different because I did it in collaboration with a prominent Canadian filmmaker who had two basic purposes: one, to take up an issue that is an important issue within Arab societies and an issue that, whenever it is dealt with in the press, is dealt with from a kind of 'Isn't that awful, just look what these Arabs are doing to one another!' angle; and two, to say to people yes, the situation is bad, but look there is a process under way and these people are tying to change things, in other words, to try to make people look at the issue in a different way. She worked very hard at getting people to tell their stories and I think that the result is very interesting.

Attitudes are changing. When I came here four years ago, went to one of the women's groups, and said I would like to do a story on honor killings, they told me it was impossible. Could I interview the women? Impossible. Could I interview them in silhouette? Impossible. The director even told me, "We gain nothing by you interviewing these women." Four years later when I went to her, she said "Yes, you can talk to them," and I attribute her change of heart to the fact that at the time of my second visit, the issue was being dealt with by the women's parliament and was literally begging to be explored. People *here* were asking the question, so it was much easier for us to ask it too, to find answers, and even to encourage the rest of the world, for example, Canadian NGOs, to get involved. I want to tell people something different, something they do not know, I want them at the end to say, "I never thought of that." It is like when I saw a certain documentary at the Jerusalem Film Festival by an Arab-Israeli. The documentary was on honor killings, and at the end of the story we suddenly realized that it was not the brother who killed but the sister, and I thought, "Oh my God, it is not just the man who is the victim, it is the whole society that is a victim of this kind of a system" and it changed my whole view of it. We are often frustrated by the fact that we are often restricted to doing one minute thirty pieces but at the end of the day, there's a chance that they will get people to ask different questions and this is I think the value of journalism.

Question: How would you explain your bias toward Israel?

Lyse Doucet: Give us examples.

Participant: Two weeks ago, I was watching CNN and it was covering the attack on an Israeli soldier by a group of Palestinians. When a Palestinian

was stabbed by an Israeli, all we heard was that a Palestinian had been stabbed and was thought to be the killer's seventh victim, but in the report involving the Israeli soldier, we got to hear so many details, such as the fact that this was not an isolated incident as the Palestinians are constantly attacking settlers all the time, and so on.

Eric Weiner: I think what played a large role in the 'biased' coverage here is simply the fact that the attack on the Israeli soldier was televised, while, unfortunately for Mr. Natsheh and his family in Abu Tor, the murder was not captured on videotape. I am confident that the story of the Israeli soldier, had the cameras not been there, would have disappeared pretty quickly, but the cameras captured it and they were able to show this picture of a brutal mob and a helpless Israeli soldier. The Israelis are debating amongst themselves concerning what the soldier should have done, but the incident was captured on videotape, which is why it was covered more.

Secondly, the Israelis made a big deal of the incident, with Netanyahu going so far as to suspend the peace process, so now we are reporting on a breakdown in the peace process and we have no choice but to say that the peace process broke down because the Israelis say that this kind of violence is unacceptable. It is for these two reasons that Mr. Natsheh slipped down the totem pole of events, even though we tried to convey the message that although the peace process had been suspended because of the attack in Ramallah, there had also been an attack in Jerusalem. Again, we come back to the problem that we only have limited time.

Lyse Doucet: You have to be fair and refrain from passing judgment based on one report, and you have to give us the benefit of the doubt. Say the day after the Natsheh stabbing Faisal Husseini had said, "They shut off the security camera, look what they did, they tried to hide our reality" then we would have treated the story as a running story and dealt with it in more depth. On the day that the stabbing happened, however, our main responsibility was to say what had happened, to whom, and where, and then say a little about the implications and why the incident matters because increasingly our editors are asking, "Why does this matter? Why should someone living in the UK or Britain care?" We have to simplify, we have to say there is a human issue and you should care. Anything else has to wait.

It is a very imperfect world, and we cannot defend every aspect of every media because we work under the pressure of time and the pressure of working with what is available, and we do, perhaps, occasionally get the balance wrong. However, I honestly believe that the vast majority of foreign journalists working here do not deliberately set out to 'have a go' at one side or the other.

Eric Weiner: Yes, we try to be fair. Regarding the best kind of story to offer us: give us a happy story, and I think every journalist will be inclined, with so much negativity here, to jump at the chance of doing this one rare story with a silver lining.

PART II:

COMMUNICATION,
PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND FUNDRAISING

PART II:

COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

7   HOW JOURNALISTS WORK - NEWS GATHERING AND RESEARCH

Rami G. Khouri

If you hope to make use of the mass media and journalists to further the goals of your organization, you should know how the news media works, and specifically how reporters and editors go about doing their job. The following is an overview of how journalists work (in an ideal world) to produce good news stories or features. Most of these principles will be important for you in your dealings with the press, but these principles are also valid for the production of your own informational materials.

I. WHAT DO YOU WRITE ABOUT IN THE PRESS?

What is news? What should be included in a newspaper? The two are not always the same thing. News is information about an event or a statement that is either new or important (important meaning that it will have some impact on the quality of people's well-being or future quality of life, in the material or psychological sense). Sometimes we print material that is not news, because it is not new or important; but it is published for some other reason. These other reasons reflect three related issues:

1. The nature and purpose of the newspaper (or any other press organization, such as a television or radio station, a magazine, newsletter, etc.). Publications, decide to publish news on the basis of their professional goals and focus of interest, which can be: politics, ideology, nationalism, economics, sports, religion, culture, sensationalism, light entertainment, personal promotion of the owner, or pure financial profit. A paper will publish material that is not necessarily news, in the strict sense of not being new and important, if it meets any of the above goals. These 'news values' are important to know for every publication and every journalist.

2. The nature of the news item itself. Four elements determine if a piece of news or any article will be printed:

    a) Is it new?
    b) Is it important?
    c) Does it entertain the reader?
    d) Does it contribute to the professional goals of the publication?

3. The nature and role of the press as a whole. The press in any society plays any or all of the following roles:

    a) to inform people with basic facts;
    b) to explain and analyze events;
    c) to entertain and amuse, perhaps to shock;
    d) to play a role of political accountability and checks-and-balances; keeping watch over the government, the private sector, the non-governmental organizations and civil society, and other sectors of the mass media.

II. HOW IS NEWS AND OTHER MATERIAL PRESENTED AND PUBLISHED?

A publication that decides to publish information about a subject has the option of dealing with it in many different ways, reflecting the above factors that define the aim of the paper and the press sector as a whole in that society. The journalist and the publication play the role of a gate-keeper, deciding which events in society will be covered, published and brought to the attention of readers, and which items will be ignored and left out of the press. A newspaper has different ways to treat any subject or event:

a) a straightforward news item;
b) a feature story or investigative, in-depth article;
c) a news analysis;
d) an interview or personality profile;
e) an opinion column or editorial;
f) a photo-story;
g) a series of articles.

Other factors that determine the impact of a piece of news or article are (in a newspaper): the page on which it is published, its place at the top or bottom of the page, the size of the headline and the text, the use of photos or illustrations, and whether the news is followed up with other coverage on other days.

III. PRINCIPLES THAT DETERMINE THE QUALITY AND CREDIBILITY OF A NEWS STORY OR FEATURE STORY

1. *Accuracy*: This is the most important of all journalistic principles. Facts must be checked by the writer to be sure they are accurate, even if they are obtained from a credible source. The reporter-writer is fully responsible for the accuracy of the information in the story he/she writes. Any story should be reviewed for accuracy by the writer before it is submitted to the editors, and the writer should be confident that he/she can defend the story if the story is challenged after it is published.

2. *Balance:* Any story with a controversy in it should be presented to the reader in a balanced manner, giving both sides of the story. One side may be given more weight, but the reader must be treated with respect and told that two sides exist, so he can decide himself which side to believe. If a journalist wants to write a story that is mainly designed to present an opinion, this should be done in a personal opinion column or an editorial, and not in news stones or features.

3. *Depth and comprehensiveness*: Complex stories must be told with their full depth and in a comprehensive manner, so that the reader is given the full picture of what happened. Incomplete coverage will reduce the credibility and impact of the newspaper.

4. *Background*: The full background to any story should be given so that the reader who is new to the story has a full idea of what happened before. Most news stories have some background to them and the reader needs this background to be able to fully understand the story.

5. *Consequences and implications*: The reader must be told about the future consequences and implications of the story, and why the story is important.

6. *Organization of news story or article*: An article should be organized and written in a manner that makes it easy for the reader to grasp the important facts and move through the text with ease. This requires the following:

   a) inverted pyramid style, with the most important facts at the beginning and the less important facts later on;

   b) using relatively short sentences and grouping two or three short sentences in a single paragraph;

   c) bringing up one new idea in each paragraph.

7. *Style of writing:* The writing style should make it easy for the reader to keep reading and absorb information. This can involve the following:

   a) using lively quotations;

   b) focusing on the human interest angle and writing about real people and their experiences;

   c) anticipating the questions the ordinary reader will ask and giving the answers in the story.

The combination of the above factors and principles in a story will make it professionally of good quality, and thus will make the article credible to the reader. Credibility is essential for the success of any publication, especially in today's competitive commercial market. Only a newspaper that is credible can have an impact on its readers and society as a whole.

IV. How to Research and Write a Comprehensive, Credible News Article or Feature Story

1. *Define the assignment and goal* before doing anything else: What is the main issue to be covered, what are the main questions to be answered? The assignment and goal may change as you do the reporting, but it is important to start with a clear focus on what you aim to write about.

2. *Prepare for your fieldwork* by doing appropriate homework and research:

   a) read any available background material in books, encyclopae-dias, on the Internet, in press archives, etc.;

   b) talk to colleagues or specialists in the field about the story and get information from them about issues to cover and people to interview;

   c) refine the basic questions to be answered, events to be cov-ered, places to visit, and people to interview.

3. *Obtain and read any available material about the subject* (e.g., press releases, communiqués or recent newspaper stones or interviews), in order to have the latest available information.

4. *Attend events in person*: observe actions and events, note statements, made and identify the mood and atmosphere of the event and people involved.

5. *Interview relevant people* to obtain both information/facts and opin-ion/analysis. Make sure to get different viewpoints if the issue being covered is controversial, and that the people you interview are credible and speak with authority. Do telephone or e-mail interviews if you cannot see the people in person for some reason.

6. *Analyze the facts and opinions* you have obtained and think about the material you have obtained; discuss the material with colleagues or friends before starting to write. Determine what is new and important, and what is the key point you want to convey to the reader.

7. *Decide how the material* you gathered *will be presented* in the newspa-per - as a news story, feature, analysis, interview, profile, investigative report, personal column, editorial, photo story, series of articles, etc. Consult with your editor on how the material is best presented to the public.

8. *Make a simple outline for the story that includes:*

   a) the key point that will be put in the lead of the article and the secondary details that will follow the lead;

b) people who will be quoted;

c) any human interest angle to be included in the story;

d) background information;

e) future implications and consequences of the story.

9. *Write the article,* making sure it is accurate, balanced, fair, clear, and comprehensive. If anything is missing or unclear, use the phone to get more information.

10. *Revise the article* yourself, after sharing it with colleagues, your editor, friends, or family members. Make sure that you can defend the article for accuracy and balance if someone might challenge the article after it is published. Ask yourself always before submitting a story for publication: could you defend the accuracy, balance and fairness of this article in a court of law?

11. *After the article is published, get feedback* from colleagues, friends or people whom you interviewed, quoted, wrote about, or obtained information from. Send a copy of the article to key contacts if it is particularly important or about a controversial subject; ask your contacts if the article was accurate and fair, and thank them for their cooperation (so that they will respect your professionalism, and cooperate with you the next time you need them as news sources).

12. *Read articles in other publications about the same subject and compare* their coverage to yours. Did they have a different angle or focus? Did they identify important issues that you missed? Did they interview good people that you missed?

8 THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS - HOW IT WORKS

Tudor Lomas[1]

When dealing with the media one should have or develop some sense of 'media market' as thinking of the media as a market can be quite helpful. There are organizations that want information and dozens of others that are producing news and information, so there is a certain market mechanism that has to be understood. Carrying our adequate research and developing a comprehensive understanding of the market are but two ways of ensuring success when dealing with the media.

A few years ago I was doing a report for the BBC in Eritrea on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the longest war in Africa. Talking to the people who were deeply involved in the struggle, I was often asked "How can we get the rest of world to understand our case?" and I tried to explain that once I had returned home and presented my 20-minute report on one of the BBC World Service Programs, I would be bothered with other things, such as how to cut my lawn, pay the electricity bill, decide upon schools for my children, and other everyday matters. In England, people do not even know where Eritrea is; they may have heard the word once or twice, but to get a message across one has to know how to communicate with the addressees, i.e., by using terms and words that they understand.

THE NEWSROOM

In any newsroom, the task is essentially the same: to find out what is happening, to understand it, and to 'process' the information into a form that is suitable/interesting/entertaining for the audience/readership. A newsroom is essentially a place where information and sources of information are coming in and need to be processed into a radio program or a newspaper. During this processing, honesty, credibility, and accurateness are essential. A good journalist must try to find out and understand what is going on and then explain it to the people in a way that makes them take notice, so that the story has an impact. A 'proper' news organization should be like a lens, focusing the information so that the people will see an accurate, objective version of what is happening and making sure that news items do not get distorted, damaged or ignored in this processing. All the different sources

---

[1] Tudor Lomas worked for the BBC for many years and has been running the European Union Med Media Jemstone training program in the Mediterranean Arab World region, based in Amman. He is an experienced journalist.

of information and news come in from the organization's own reporters, other news organizations, or other media; a good first step is often to look through the papers, not for the obvious stories but for ideas, potential stories or ways a story could be taken on. A few years ago, for example, I was involved in a campaign to keep the small school my children attended open; it was due to be closed down because only big schools were wanted. I noticed that at the Conservative Party's Annual Conference a statement about small schools had been made, and I knew that the weekly *Times Educational* - a publication specifically for teachers and people in the field of education –wanted to cover this story, so I sent them an immediate press release, which I wrote myself, about the fact that in view of this statement, this little school in Surrey had decided to stay open. We got a two-page article the following week – so an initial idea was taken and became a story. If you have information about something, think about who can get you good media coverage and get in touch with the right outlets.

It can be a real power element if there is someone you can turn to on a certain subject, someone you can trust, so nurturing such a relationship is very important, but one has to be straight with the media contacts. Only if one is viewed as a credible source supplying objective information, will the media make use of it; after all, there is a lot of pressure coming from the editors, the readership or viewers or listeners, and if someone turns out to be less than honest, his reputation as a source is damaged. A good example is Green Peace, which nearly shot itself in the foot some two or three years ago on the issue of the oil platform in the North Sea that Shell was going to dump out in the Atlantic Ocean. Green Peace started getting very noisy about it, saying that this was bad for the environment, and got a lot of publicity. At that point, people started to do some research and found that all the respectable scientific sources were saying the same thing: that the safest and most sensible thing to do was to dump it in the ocean. Green Peace's reputation has still not fully recovered.

Good, diligent journalists will try to be as honest and accurate as possible, to ensure that their 'public' receives news it can rely on. Moreover, they will attempt to work quickly and with style. The guiding principle is to serve the public, not the interests of the owners of the organizations for which they work, the advertisers, or even the State.

Much of my own experience has been within the BBC, an organization that takes its journalistic responsibilities very seriously. The BBC Producer Guidelines provide many useful observations:

> "Due impartiality lies at the heart of the BBC. It is a core value...It requires program makers to show open-mindedness, fairness and a respect for truth...The BBC should treat controversial subjects with due accuracy and impartiality...due impartiality does not require absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from fundamental democratic principles. The BBC is explicitly forbidden from broadcasting its own opinions on current affairs.

> "Reporting should be dispassionate, wide-ranging and well-informed. In reporting matters of controversy the main differing views

should be given due weight in the period during which the controversy is active. News judgements will take account of events as well as arguments." [Accuracy can be difficult to achieve, and it is important to distinguish between first and second-hand sources. An error in one report is often recycled in another.]

"BBC programs should be based on fairness, openness and straight dealing...News programs should offer viewers and listeners an intelligent and informed account of issues that enables them to form their own views...Audiences should not be able to gauge from BBC programs the personal views of presenters and reporters."

Many newsrooms (and journalists and media organizations) fall short of this ideal, but if they do not accept it then they are propagandists. With this in mind, it is important to look in more detail at the workings of a newsroom and see what opportunities exist to influence its output.

Some of the sources of news are as follows:

- news agencies
- press releases
- news conferences
- official edicts
- calls from the public
- other media
- checks with newsmakers
- news diary
- own reporters/correspondents

Most of these are passive, in the sense that the journalist sits in the newsroom and waits for the news to come to him/her, and for many organizations this is the reality. If this is true within media organizations that are important to you, then you need to make sure you are providing the kind of 'official' information that will be taken seriously and covered by that organization.

The later items on the list above involve more active newsgathering: looking for stories, not just accepting other people's judgement on what makes a good story. If, for example, a news organization that is important to you has a correspondent who specializes in environmental issues and your organization is involved with such issues, then you should study the work of this journalist and try to establish and maintain contact with him/her; it is in both your interests to do so.

As a good journalist or media person one should also show initiative, and, for example, ring the police to see if something is going on, or the ambulance station to see if there have been any accidents, etc. There are lots of press releases and bits of other information coming in, but a decent news organization should be initiating things as well, taking into consideration the commercial and political pressures on media people, who often might hear

something like: "Well, if you were a 'proper' radio station, you would be doing this and that."

A good media organization should not only be an initiator; it should also be setting agendas by looking at the stories that are coming up the next week and preparing a news diary. In a media organization like the BBC, a third of the staff is involved in planning and creating a decent news diary, knowing what is coming up, preparing material or a feature in advance, etc. For example, in Britain, the unemployment figures are published on the 15th of each month, so talking to the people in the right ministries a few days before one enables one to form an idea about what the figures are likely to be, and then go to a factory and do a nice report that will leave the viewer well informed regarding the real economic situation.

All these sources of news result in potential stories pouring down on the central news desk every day, where they are sorted, assessed, and rewritten before a selection is packaged in the newspaper or radio or TV station. In many instances, if not the vast majority, all this happens in an atmosphere of chaos, panic and confusion with staff facing an immovable deadline, political and commercial pressures, and frequently, insufficient access to all the facts.

Pictures are very important, considering that some 80 percent of what people take away from the TV screen they take from the images that they see there. If one is setting up an interview for example, one should make certain that the picture that will be on the screen matches the organization's interests and represents it well. For example, I was working for an organization called 'The Development Board for Wales', and a famous Welshman came to open a certain event. Just towards the end, we realized that we did not have the banner behind his head so that the photographs that appeared in the newspapers appeared to have nothing to do with Wales. It is the same with logos or a name the people recognize – these are very important tools.

If one knows how to use newspapers to get a story covered in a desired way, this can be very useful for an organization, not least in terms of public relations. Once an article has been published, it can be copied and sent to everybody who should have it; that way, the organization gains a lot of outside credibility because it has proof that what it has to say is newsworthy and therefore important. The same goes for radio or TV coverage. One should bear in mind that journalists are often extremely busy, so giving them as much information as possible will help make sure that things are reported in the hoped for way; however, it must also be borne in mind that by covering a certain story, the media organization itself takes a stand or position on that topic, and that in doing this, it must take into consideration its public, readers, viewers, or listeners.

The conclusions are, therefore, that one should study each of the media organizations that are important to an organization or a certain purpose and get to know their strengths and weaknesses and their ways of operating, then turn them to one's own advantage. If one knows, for example, that

there is always a crisis at 4 p.m. as the editor finds he/she is short of stories, then one should get used to faxing a story at ten to four. If it is known that they will print a well-written press release without changing anything or checking it properly then take time and make an effort to write and present a really good press release. If an important journalist is known for liking to uncover stories himself/herself, then he/she should be given a tip-off rather than a predigested, beautifully written story. If a certain paper is under political pressure not to print stories that provide the opinion of the opposition with a platform, then one needs to find ways to present such stories in a manner that will result in them being published.

Finally remember that your interests and the journalists' interests are not the same; their task is to tell people what is going on, not to argue your case for you. The greater your understanding of the media, the more realistic your expectations will be and the more constructively and creatively you will be able to work with them.

9 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Tudor Lomas

With regard to establishing contact with the media, it is essential to know one's publicity goals and target audiences and to understand what kind of issues journalists are interest in and how to be able to provide it. If one can come up with an event where journalists can get some really good interviews or video-footage – preferably, from their point of view, that no one else has – they will come. It is a two-way relationship: the media needs you for a source of information, while you need them for coverage, but do not expect something in return every time you do them a favor.

At the moment, the year 2000 is a huge international story and anything that contributes to that story and to understanding its broadest sense is important. Therefore, an organization should find a way to tie at least one of its projects to the Millennium. Another popular issue is Palestinian statehood.

When there is not much news around, it is a good idea to refresh media contacts, which often may lead to a new story. If an idea is dismissed by the media contact as 'boring', one should ask what kind of information would be needed to make it newsworthy. Communications people should be – although this is not always the case - part of the policy-making process of the organizations for which they work, which means they should be able to say, "Look, there is a real opportunity here; if we start doing now something we were planning to do next year, we are going to get some good coverage." To some extent, communications people should be able to shape what their organization is doing, assuming that the benefits derived from the hoped for publicity warrant this. The public face or spokesperson of an organization should be someone able and dynamic as he or she will make a significant contribution to the overall image, which is of great importance.

A few years ago I attended an important workshop for economic journalists in Amman, and one of the speakers was the Prime Minister's Economic Advisor. What he had to say was extremely interesting, but once he had finished, a Dutch journalist remarked that of the 20 journalists present, only four had taken notes. The foreign media organizations need stories to justify spending tens of thousands of dollars on having people in this region, and you should consider it part of your job to help make sure that they get them. In this respect it is always useful to tie 'minor' events with 'major'

ones, even if you have to spend some time racking your brains to find a way to do this and even if, under certain circumstances, you feel that this is somehow 'taking advantage' of people's misfortune.

Rami Khoury: Human drama is extremely important in the world of media. Whether preparing an annual report, a brochure or an article, one should try to draw attention to it by using human drama. A lot of the problems in the Middle East in general and Palestine in particular are the result of gross injustice, but the media does not work according to justice, but according to drama and entertainment, which must be used in order to introduce a message and get a story into the media.

A second point is that if one wants coverage by the international media, he should play on the fact that journalists talk to each other all the time. A good relationship with a few respected journalists increases the chances that they will give your name to their colleagues when asked who would be a good person to contact. The strength of such a relationship will depend to a great extent on the credibility of the information that one supplies and the willingness to provide information without necessarily expecting some form of instantaneous reward.

Tudor Lomas: It can be very useful to build a list of key media contacts and set target dates by which one wants to meet them. Sending a press release, for example, is a good reason to ring them up and have a chat, and within some weeks one will be able to draw on a group of good media contacts.

A proper journalist should be totally objective and leave his own viewpoints out of his reporting. Once a journalist has built up a good reputation – as honest and accurate, etc. - he might get away with imposing his personal opinion a couple of times, but he is going to lose credibility if he does it too often. There might always be an occasion in which a journalist gets involved in a story and reports what is going on partly to achieve a particular end.

For instance, the BBC as an organization was not morally neutral on the issue of apartheid in South Africa, which it regarded as wrong, and reported from that point of view; however, it was only able to do this because the overwhelming majority of people felt the same. The BBC tends to reflect the general public view and does not see itself as a champion or an advocate. In the case of Lebanon, for example, one of the functions of the media is to reflect the views of the various communities involved, but no one expected an extremely sympathetic hearing for Hizbollah, whilst it was obvious that there will be lots of details about the Maronite community.

One should not get too far out of touch with one's audience and should make every effort to tell them what one considers important, even if it meets with some initial disinterest. There is a new British magazine called

The Week, which is a digest of what is published everywhere else. It has a very interesting column called 'Important, but Boring' that deals with things that have happened which, although 'boring', have the potential to affect people's lives. One of the things to be done when trying to sell a story is to explain why an apparently boring story has the potential to be very interesting so that the journalist will take another look at it.

Timing and accuracy are of great importance. If the timing is wrong, it can be the end of a story, and if a bit of paper is tatty, crucial details may be lost. It should be always assured that the details on the letterhead are correct and, if needed, a number is added where one can be reached outside normal working hours (as journalists frequently come up with stories late at night and it is important that they know that you are willing to provide them with a quote or some kind of information).

Another important thing is to refrain from overstating things, putting things that are not true, and making what you write – whether it be in a press release, a brochure or a newsletter - so sensational that you cannot sustain it. A good example in this respect is the 'March of the One Million' [on the occasion of the 50th An-Naqba anniversary in May 1998], when certain Palestinians told the news agencies that one million Palestinians were expected to take to the streets; it soon transpired that the figure had been grossly overestimated.

Rami Khoury: There is another dimension to this example, which is to get the media to focus on the relevant points from the beginning. In this particular instance, the focus was not on the real issue, namely the reason why the people were taking to the streets, but on the number of people who did so. One should make every effort to shape and define a story right from the very first press release; instead of saying "I am sending you a press release about one million Palestinians joining a march" you say "I am sending you a press release pertaining to the fact that 50 years after the creation of Israel, demonstrations are taking place in all Palestinian towns and villages in relation to the issue of who owns the land." Catchy phrases are important: 'Who owns the land?', 'Whose land is this?'; journalists love catchy phrases, so they should be included in these kinds of communications.

Tudor Lomas: I would now like to move away from the media and look at various methods of communication and the importance of the right piece of paper landing on the right desk at the right time and in the right way. I would also like us to consider the following questions: Who takes the decisions that affect your organizations, what motivates these people and how can you influence them?

The history of Jemstone, with which I got involved in 1995, is a useful case study here. We are the largest of the European Union's Med Media projects, established to increase contacts and understanding between media professionals in Europe and the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, including

Israel and the Palestinian territories. Our history is one of constant struggle to maintain funding from the European Commission in Brussels.

For us the success of our work on the ground here (conducting seminars, workshops, courses, exchange visits and consultancy assignments) has had to take second place to lobbying the officials and others in Brussels to ensure that our funding continues. It is not enough to do what you set out to do and to do it well; that alone will not ensure your continuation. You need to understand how the essential decisions about your future are taken and learn how to make sure that they are favorable.

In our own case, at the end of 1995, Brussels decided to suspend over 300 Euro-Med projects while new mechanisms for running those projects were developed. Three years later those projects are still suspended. However, two projects (one in the Maghreb and our own) have continued with special funding.

In order to continue receiving funding, we had to put a lot of effort into understanding how Brussels works and into finding supporters. This entailed studying the European Commission, the Parliament, the role of the national governments, the relationship between a commissioner and his 'civil service', the importance of the European Union 'Embassies' in this region, how information flows between these various actors, who is influential, etc.

I would not encourage any of you to seek funding from Brussels unless you are prepared to spend a lot of time and energy understanding how that whole monstrous machine works. Nevertheless, the way we went about influencing the decision-makers is relevant to your experience: studying the scene, identifying the key actors, working out how to change their minds, paying lots of attention to timing, etc.

If you are trying to affect people's behavior, it is important first to predispose them towards the change, then enable the change to take place and finally reinforce the changes when they have occurred. It is also necessary to identify your key allies, who are essential for the success of your lobbying, and those who can prevent you from succeeding, so that you can concentrate your limited resources where they will have most impact. The more preparation you have carried out the more likely you are to communicate your message to the right person, at the right time, in the right language and using the right arguments to influence them.

When lobbying in the name of a cause or project the best thing is to write an individual letter to each person or at least divide your audience a bit so that you know the kind of argument that will be relevant for each group.

In order to predispose people towards change one need to make them appreciate the potential benefits. In most instances, this would usually entail ensuring that the findings of any surveys that support an argument are widely published and some good media coverage is provided. A good part

of dealing with democracy and pluralism involves predisposing people towards taking decisions. This is very important particularly with regard to the senior people, whose position is based on the old ways of doing things. I was amazed to discover that the editor-in-chief of *Ha'aretz* does not check his own e-mail; in fact, he cannot even type! For example, by trying to get people like him to use e-mail, one should tell them what benefits they will get from using it and point out the disadvantages of not knowing how to use it, whilst trying to make them feel old-fashioned and at a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* their more technically adept colleagues.

***

Participants were asked to provide some examples about the kind of problems they are facing in their organizations. The example below was considered by the whole group the in some detail:

A small Palestinian NGO working with deaf people over the age of 13, whose board members are all deaf and, to complicate matters further, who do not all use the standard sign language, is in dire need of funding to pay off debts and ensure the continuation of its services. Dealings with the PA were almost impossible since no one in any of the responsible offices understood the sign language and many of the additional problems resulted from the fact that it was not the Ministry of Social Affairs that was in charge, but the Ministry of the Interior, whose employees were perceived as simply unable to understand the need for such services.

The energetic and interactive session that followed engaged the participants in a brain-stormed over possible sources of funding, useful connections, arguments to use and a strategy to adopt, trying to clarify the difference between the aims and the process of achieving those aims, in the context of the means available to organizations that often do not have enough money to pay their phone bills. Among the potential sources of funding discussed were the following:

- existing funders

- the authorities, both local and beyond - how to approach them (what are they doing for this group of handicapped people?)

- businesses/private sector - arguments to put forward (publicity, sponsorship)

- small membership fee

- public/prominent figures - how to use them
- street collections (which had been done in the past but turned out to be illegal)
- international donors
- international deaf organizations (for advice)

The participants decided that it would be beneficial to try to develop and maintain the group as a network, with the members offering ideas and support to one another in the future, perhaps in the presence of an outside facilitator.

10   PUBLIC RELATIONS: KEY POINTS

Dr. Nash'at Al-Aqtash[1]

WHAT IS PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND WHAT ITS PURPOSE?

Public relations (PR) adapts to developments and changes in the priority and nature of tasks to be carried out within an organization. The field of media, for example, is constantly witnessing changes in terms of new technology and the effectiveness of different mediums, and the fact that competition amongst media people is intensifying all the time means that anyone working in PR must remain up to date with any new developments, and, in addition, must know how to use the various mediums to best advantage.

The term PR is used in various ways. For example, it is used in regard to the relationship between an organization and the people it serves, the ways in which favorable relationships are achieved, and the quality or status of those relationships. It is also used as a noun: "How's your public relations?" Although singular in meaning, the term is written and spoken of in the plural, and is frequently used interchangeably with other terms such as propaganda, information, communication, advertising, and persuasion.

For the last 50 years, practitioners, writers and editors have sought to capture the essence of the term 'public relations'. One well-known newsletter dealing with public relations defines it as "a management function, which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization in accordance with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance."

Another way of putting it is that PR is a distinctive management function that helps establish and maintain mutually beneficial lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and coordination between an organization and its public whilst dealing with certain problems or issues. PR is useful for managers in that it helps them to keep abreast of and utilize developments. Its principal role, therefore, is to serve as a communication tool whose benefits should be felt by both the organization and the public it serves.

---

[1] Dr. Nash'at Al-Aqtash is Assistant Professor, Media Center, Birzeit University.

FUNCTIONS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

PR has several functions, which could be summarized as follows:

PR is a medium of communication between a company and its public (see Figure 1), which the company employs in providing the public with products, services or ideas. Obviously, the main objection of PR is to provide the public with a favorable image of the company/organization in question. The PR officer, manager or consultant is responsible to senior officials and is expected to fulfill three basic tasks:

1. To facilitate and ensure an inflow of representative opinions from the organization's public so that policies and activities will be tuned to the needs and views of the said public and to use this information in counseling senior officials.

2. To counsel senior officials on ways and means of maintaining or reshaping operations or communication policies in order to gain maximum public acceptance.

3. To devise and implement programs that will give a favorable impression of the organization and guarantee widespread support of its policies and operations.

FIGURE 1:
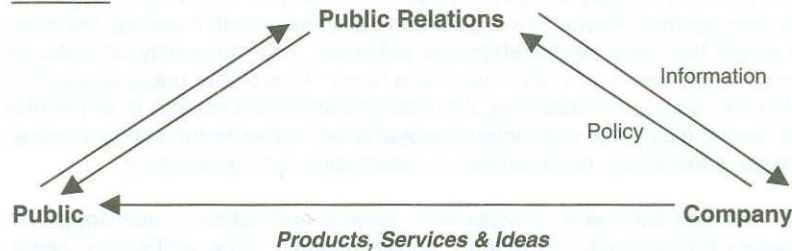
PR people are often responsible for releasing news about the organization's activities, products, etc. to the media, and in some cases, to governmental agencies, schools, welfare, health and other agencies; in other words, they are required to gain positive publicity for their organization. The main difference between publicity and news is that with publicity, it is the sponsor who considers what is newsworthy, whereas with news, it is frequently the media and public who decide. It does not necessarily follow that the media organization to which information is relayed will consider it worthy of distribution.

PR work and fundraising are closely connected, with the former having a direct impact on the latter. For thousands of private health, education, and welfare agencies, for example, fundraising – their lifeblood – relies primarily on effective communications and PR. Similarly, trade associations, professional societies, and labor unions, whose funding is usually acquired in the form of membership fees, also rely heavily on good communications in

which the aims and progress of the organization are always portrayed in a positive manner. For non-governmental organizations (NGOs), fundraising and organizing membership drives are two of the most significant functions of their PR departments, and the function of executive secretaries or directors, PR executives, and outside fundraising experts inevitably overlap during the efforts to secure funding.

PR involves a considerable amount of research - opinion polls, questionnaires, etc. – which the PR person will refer to whilst advising his superiors with regard to how the public are likely to perceive the organization's policies or activities. Research is also valuable in that it allows the organization to evaluate ongoing programs and to decide whether they should be continued, revised or cancelled.

The most hectic part of a PR person's job is related to the constant efforts to attract the attention of the mass media, and in this respect, the PR person is actually playing the role of a press officer. Worthy of note is the fact that a very thin line separates what is done to promote a product or service in the name of PR and what is done in the name of marketing. As part of PR special events and services – such as operating a day-care center – are often organized. With this kind of activity an organization aims to create mutual understanding with its public and be perceived in a positive light.

A very important aspect of any PR person's work is the responsibility he or she bears for defending the organization in the event of a crisis such as a strike, or the spreading of damaging information concerning a service or product offered by the organization capable of affecting its credibility or financial status. In short, the job of a PR person is to smother the flame of the crisis before it turns into a fire.

When crises do arise, the PR person is usually obliged to work under various pressures, such as a lack of time, information and qualified personnel. Most large organizations, however, have carefully planned emergency plans, stipulating who does what and when, to be implemented at once should any crisis occur.

PUBLIC RELATIONS PLANNING FORMAT

The following seven basic steps can be distinguished when preparing a planning format for small and medium PR programs:

1. *Summary:*

   In 10-15 lines (100-150 words), summarize the information that you have gathered as follows:

   - The most significant information
   - An analysis of the data
   - Options/alternatives

2. *The Problem and the Opportunity:*

    Before the PR program is planned, the problem should be iden-
    tified in 3-4 lines. Next, in 4-5 lines you should determine
    whether PR has a role to play in a particular situation. The five
    most favorable conditions for achieving maximum potential ef-
    fectiveness of a PR program are as follows:

    1. If consumers are in a mood to accept the information or the
        idea.

    2. If the opportunity exists to push customers to prefer the or-
        ganization/company to another offering similar services/
        products.

    3. If the company/organization provides special services/
        products that help build mental associations.

    4. The existence of a powerful emotional appeal.

    5. Adequacy of funds.

3. *The Objective:*

    Describe the objective in two lines only. In doing this, bear in
    mind the following: there should be only one objective; the need
    to be single-minded; and the importance of including figures
    and percentages.

    Ideally, each problem should have its own individual plan.

    (Some planners decide upon the objective after analyzing the
    market.)

4. *Analysis of the Market Situation:*

    A key step in the planning process is known as analyzing the
    market, and many planners do not decide upon the objective
    until they have completed this analysis. In analyzing the market,
    one should answer the following questions:

    1. Where are we now?

    2. Why are we there?

    3. What is the target market?

    4. Where do we want to be?

    5. What 'key' can help us?

    6. What response do we want?

5.   *Planning the Strategy:*

When deciding upon which media to use, you should consider the options carefully and bear in mind that you need to reach the maximum number of people at the minimum cost. It is also important to decide upon the best time for beginning a campaign.

Before creating a 'message', answer the following questions:

1.   What goals do we seek to accomplish?

2.   What kind of people do we target?

3.   How do those people perceive our company?

4.   What do we want those people to feel, think and do?

5.   What key thought could we put into those people's minds to make them think, feel and believe, as we want them to?

6.   What tone of voice will get those people to listen to and believe us?

7.   What slogans/theme would help in attracting people to our company?

8.   What would be the best idea to use?

9.   Who is/are the best person/s to endorse it?

6.   *Budget:*

Decide how much money you need to achieve the objective and prepare a budget accordingly.

7.   *Results and Evaluation*

11 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND FUNDRAISING - KEY ISSUES AND CONCEPTS

Kathy Sullivan[1]

The following are the issues that you have to deal with if you are the person inside the organization responsible for dealing with fundraising and public or media relations.

INTERNAL HOUSEKEEPING

The success of communications or fundraising plans depends on how well they are integrated within an overall organizational strategic plan. It also depends on how well top management and board members understand and support the work and consider the public relations/fundraising person an important asset in every phase of the organization's development. A third element is the need to empower all other staff members, which involves both teaching them and learning from them, allowing them to make an effective contribution to the success of your plan.

Aspects of Internal Housekeeping

- Insist on **agreement on organizational goals and objectives**. Suggest a strategic planning workshop or other exercise if needed, to develop your communications plan/mission statement, which should reflect a certain consensus inside the organization. Use the plan/statement to resist being dragged off course by individual egos or personal interests. All media and fundraising activities should be assessed according to the extent to which they help to implement the plan.

- Make sure that the **public relations/fundraising person is part of the management team** that makes decisions about the organization's direction and future. Public relations and fundraising staff need to work with senior management/board members to develop mission statements, strategic plans and new organizational initiatives. Involve them in developing, not only approving your plans.

---

[1] Kathy Sullivan is a freelance writer and media expert, currently based in Amman.

- **Get involved in shaping 'products'** (services, benefits, projects) of the organization from the beginning, not only 'selling' them. For example, if your organization decides to seek funding from a major international donor agency, is it set up to manage the funds according to the donors' specifications, or is there something that could be done *now* to better position it as a qualified recipient of funding? How would the required changes affect other activities of the organization? How would this new donor change the organization's image for the better/worse? How would it play in the media? A fundraising or public relations person will have to do the research, the talking, and the networking with donors and media people, etc., and it is important that they 'keep a finger on the pulse' to examine how others see the organization. This dual vision – from the inside and from the outside – is extremely important.

- **Assess internal organizational capabilities**. Are basic administrative and financial controls and reporting processes in place to handle money and trace its source, the way in which it is distributed, and its benefits in a proper manner? Can you reliably document the impact of your work with statistics, case studies, photos/video, and 'testimonies' from beneficiaries? An inability to do all this can blow an organization's entire reputation.

- **Conduct a risk assessment**. Are there any 'skeletons' in your organization's closet, anything questionable or 'difficult' that colors the way that the organization is seen in the community or by the media that could come out as a result of your more aggressive external communications/fundraising efforts? Train the staff how to respond *before* an embarrassing interview or news item suddenly appears.

- **Secure necessary resources and set realistic goals**. Be sure that management/board members understand that effective fundraising and media relations require certain resources (money, staff, databases, etc.), time to research and cultivate contacts, and their personal involvement and cooperation.

- **Agree on roles and levels of authority**. Who are the board/staff members authorized to make statements and/or respond to the media? It is wise to have *all* media inquiries directed to the designated public relations person for screening, before they are passed on to the correct spokespersons. Organizations just starting to make a name for themselves may want to keep 'spokespersons' to a minimum, thereby maintaining control over their message/s and reinforcing the identity of the organization by relating it to one or two faces only. Agree on who in the organization will be responsible for making different levels of contact with potential/existing donors. In some organizations, the chair or president remains responsible for any direct contact with important donors, with staff providing support only, while in others, there is a sharing of this responsibility, but only once the organization's relationship with the donor is secure.

- **Agree to accept and give constructive criticism**. Senior management and board members should be willing to accept guidance and advice from the fundraising/public relations specialist on how to improve their effectiveness as media/donor spokespersons for the organization. In addition, staff members also should seek and benefit from the executives' expertise.

- **Engage other staff members**. As you develop media materials, special events, proposals and lists of prospective media contacts and donors, hold briefings for all organizational staff to inform them, benefit from their ideas and engage their support. You need them to alert you to interesting statistics, program innovations, photo opportunities and case studies (however, never use somebody as a case study, or quote them, or use their photograph or anything without their permission), and to 'tell the story' of the organization correctly in their daily dealings with the community. This is good internal public relations (it makes everyone feel valued, part of the team) and ensures that everyone in the organization is reinforcing the same messages/identity for the organization in their professional and social interactions. Sometimes the public relations/fundraising person is the only person besides the president who has a holistic view of the organization, and it is important to update the staff on new initiatives and priorities, beyond their individual jobs or projects. Eventually, you may want to conduct media training for selected staff to expand the list of qualified, reliable organizational 'spokespersons.' (Such training is highly recommended for 'frontline' staff in community-based or field projects who would be expected to guide visiting media or donors.) [2]

MISSION STATEMENT

Any organization, if it does not have a mission statement, should devise one. A mission statement is usually not more than a couple of paragraphs, depending on how complicated the organization is, and should be designed to give people not familiar with the organization as good an idea about its purpose as possible.

EXERCISE: Developing a Mission Statement/ Organizational Message

(Adapted from *Reference Manual on Fundraising for Non-US NGOs*, by Emily Gantz-McKay, MOSAICA: Center for Nonprofit Development & Pluralism, Washington, DC)

In order to sell your organization to target constituencies, the media and potential coalition partners and donors, you need a clear, accurate, coherent, and consistent description of your organization. This 'mission statement' or 'message' should communicate the essential nature of your organization, its purpose, scope of work, and unique

---

[2] A good exercise is to do a quick survey of staff in various departments/levels of the organization; ask them to write down in one sentence the major purpose (mission) of the organization and an example of how it has fulfilled this mission. The wider the diversity of responses, the greater the need to educate the staff before taking on the media and donors.

characters, and its target populations. A good statement will help you gain support and cooperation from all kinds of external allies and supporters and will also help your organization's own staff to better understand the 'big picture' to which they are contributing. It is a useful management-by-objective tool, to guide planning and decision-making based on the goals of the organization.

You will use this statement often: at the beginning of most fund-raising materials and at the end of most media materials. It can also be used as a small boxed text in any newsletter, brochure or other communication.

This exercise asks you to draft an effective mission statement/ message (from 1-2 paragraphs up to not more one than one page), using the following guidelines:

- Provide a clear **statement of the organization's mission or purpose**: the reason for its existence and its long-term goal.

- Provide basic information about the organization's **legal status or affiliation**: Are you an independent nonprofit organization (NGO)? A semi-governmental agency? A project of a larger organization? Were you originally founded by or associated with another institution that is well known and respected?

- Define your **service area or target population/s**, the geographic areas within your scope, whether you focus on certain groups, e.g., refugees, people living in poverty, or/and on age or gender group, e.g. refugee women, pre-school age children, or adolescents who have dropped out of school. Be sure to specify where your organization is based.

- Describe the **scope of activities or major program focus** of the organization: Do you provide direct services or do you train/ empower others or concentrate on raising public awareness/ changing attitudes? Do you have a program focus, e.g., mental health, early childhood development, human rights, women's legal education, employment?

- Point out **what is special or unique** about the organization: are you the first, the only, the biggest, in your town, area, or country to follow a certain strategy or to have a certain structure?

- **Make the reader want to learn more** about your organization: include interesting information and write in an active style that shows passion for the mission without over-exaggerating. Be clear and specific. Avoid cliches and vague 'buzz words'.

- **'Interpret' for the foreign, non-local reader**: explain language or culture-bound aspects of your organization's name, logo or acronym. If your acronym means something in Arabic, explain it. If you are working with a highly focused target group whose needs are not known or misunderstood outside the immediate community, you may have to provide a few lines of explanation.

- **Be consistent**. Once approved, distribute the mission statement to all staff and have the director/chair specify that everyone is to use it, verbatim, in external communications. You may need to make minor modifications for special audiences/target groups from time to time (focus on one program area over another for certain donors). Review it once a year, to update for any major changes or new developments but don't tinker unnecessarily with the basic statement. The more you use it the more your organization will stand out with a clear identity among all the publics important to your success.

In implementing media and communications strategies, it is important that things are set up properly organizationally, and there is a need to do some 'internal housekeeping' before inviting people in, especially when it comes to fundraising. When you go to the media or to donors, you are opening the doors to your organization with both its good and bad points, so make sure that you know what the minuses are and try to work on them.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS: NETWORKING AND COALITIONS

Networking and the relationships with the local community, the media, donors, and other organizations, etc. are critical and need to be nurtured. Networking keeps an organization visible in between events and helps it become known as a reliable source/colleague/community service.

Regional and global partnerships are also very useful, especially for small or new NGOs, as they provide contacts and access to workshops, international conferences, and similar venues. Linkages with existing regional or international groups can help your organization gain credibility, help with certain issues and techniques, help create a higher profile for your issue/organization, and, possibly, help in securing funding. One should not forget that this is mutually beneficial as also the organization is giving something to its partners: a wider base of representation, an insight into an issue (e.g., Palestine) and a foot in the door, and credibility as an organization that is involved 'where action is needed'.

Coalition building, whether at the local level or beyond, is also an important tool, especially in terms of being powerful with regards the following: achieving a certain goal, getting more attention and weight, approaching donors as a group, lobbying for a certain cause, organizing joint events for all members/constituencies on shared issues (e.g., public awareness campaigns, etc), exchanging information or sharing the costs for a poll, a website, or a survey.

An important rule on coalitions is that it must be a 'win-win' situation for every participating organization. None must dominate; all must benefit and shoulder agreed upon responsibilities pertaining to information-gathering/sharing, administrative work, pooling resources, etc.

12 FUNDRAISING - TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Kathy Sullivan

ESSENTIAL FUNDRAISING MATERIALS

Communications with potential donors should always be tailored to their specific interests and guidelines, based on research. Following are the most important basic pieces of writing that your organization is likely to need to initiate and respond to funding opportunities. They can be modified and reassembled to suit each purpose. Remember, the quality of organization-wide planning, discussion and consensus building that precede writing is the most important factor in your success. Trying to make a fundamentally weak idea sound/look good is a waste of organizational resources and the donor's time. You will lose credibility with important donors.

- **Organization Mission Statement:** defines your 'message', your reason for existing and major organizational strategies and priorities. Spells out how your organization is special, addresses a neglected constituency or has developed an approach that makes a different or unique contribution. Spend time drafting it and keep it short; you will incorporate it into most of your fundraising and public relations materials.

- **Brochure or Fact Sheet:** briefly outlines your mission, history, structure and achievements. Demonstrates the organization's capability and worthiness of support. A useful enclosure for all kinds of fundraising and public relations purposes. Keep it simple, not too flashy, and up-dated.

- **Letter of Inquiry:** very concisely (maximum two pages) summarizes the organization's mission/capabilities and describes the project or programs for which funding is being sought. A preliminary letter to see if the potential donor is interested in receiving a concept paper or full-fledged proposal. A highly condensed proposal, which should cover each of the components in a few sentences or paragraph (e.g., key problems, how you intend to address them, projected impact of the project, etc.). Clearly state the amount of money you are seeking and when you will phone to follow up.

- **Concept Paper:** summarizes a proposed project or program area for which funding is sought. More expanded than a letter of inquiry but without all the details of a full proposal, covering: organizational background; the need for/significance of the project; project plan; expected results; and cost estimate.

- **Project Proposal:** requests full or partial funding for a particular project and includes all of the information needed for the donor to make a decision. (See 'Proposal-Writing Tips' below.)

- **Core Activity/Program Proposal:** requests partial funding for a 'core,' usually ongoing, activity of the organization. The proposal should cover all of the projects, services or activities and constituencies involved in the program area.

- **General Support Proposal/Case Statement:** requests 'unrestricted' funds to support your activities, to spend as the organization sees fit. Could be in full proposal format or a shorter 'letter proposal.' Must make a strong case for the organization's mission, its effectiveness in addressing a need/problem and its trustworthiness (financial/administrative controls).

- **Individual Donor Letters:** address different categories of prospective individual donors, summarizing in a more personal way the main points of your mission and case statements and any program or project activities for which you may also be seeking support from individuals/smaller businesses in the local or international community. Kept to two pages, usually sent with a brochure and a card to be completed and returned with the donation. May be sent with more complex attachments as a follow-up to a personal solicitation visit with a very wealthy prospective donor, to restate the request.

- **Acknowledgement Letters/Receipts:** thank donors for their support, provide a receipt, and restate briefly how the funds will be used and reported (reflecting donor specifications).

EXERCISE: Writing a Letter of Inquiry to a Potential Donor
(Adapted from *Reference Manual on Fundraising for Non-US NGOs*, by Emily Gantz McKay, MOSAICA: Center for Nonprofit Development & Pluralism, Washington, DC)

A letter of inquiry is like a mini-proposal. It touches on every main component of a full proposal, conveys an organization's credibility and effectiveness and outlines the activity for which funding is requested in a very condensed format. Use one of your own projects as the basis for drafting a letter of inquiry to a real or imaginary potential donor. Complete each section of the letter, as described in the numbered items below. Maximum text should not exceed two typed pages, on letterhead.

CONTACT NAME   DATE
CONTACT TITLE
FOUNDATION/DONOR NAME
ADDRESS

Dear _____ ,

1. Draft a strong first paragraph requesting funds and summarizing how they will be used. Interest the funder by mentioning aspects of your activity that match its interests (based on your research).

2. Describe the need for the project or organization. What are the key problems you address? Provide some general background on the problem/need but focus on the aspects you plan to address. (Three-four paragraphs, maximum.)

3. Describe how the project/organization will address this problem - how you will make a difference. Show why your strategy/ organization is the most appropriate way to meet these needs. May include some history of your organization's involvement in these issues. (Two paragraphs.)

4. Describe major accomplishments of your organization (or the projected impact of your project) in both numerical and human terms. (Three-four paragraphs.)

5. Show the significance of your efforts beyond the immediate target group - as a pilot project for replication or as a model with national or international significance. (One paragraph.)

6. Indicate how the funds will be used; mention if some needed funds have already been secured from internal or other external sources, and whether you have already begun work on preliminary phases of a project (but need 'x' amount to complete). Never claim to have received money from somewhere when you did not, even if some of the big donors ask you to detail previous sources of donations.

7. Close with a clear request for a specific amount of money. ("ABC Organization requests $xx,xxx from the XYZ Foundation/ Corporation.") Mention the other materials you are attaching or enclosing with the letter (brochure, newsletter, newspaper article about your organization, current budget, proof of nonprofit status[1], etc.). Describe the next step. If you need to have their decision by a certain date, say so. Otherwise, state that you will phone to follow up within a few weeks. Conclude by saying that you would like to discuss the matter in person and would be more than happy to provide additional information, should it be required. You may also invite them to visit your organization or its project sites, as appropriate. (One paragraph.)

Sincerely,

Name (Your Executive Director or Chair, Board of Directors)
Title

---

[1] Some donors will want to see your financial statements and budget, perhaps going back several years, as well as proof regarding your tax-exempt status and information on your legal status (some of the larger donors in the US for example, do not fund an organization unless it is recognized by its local authority).

TIPS ON DEALING WITH (POTENTIAL) DONORS

Look for potential donors before you sit down and write the proposal, because proposals need to be tailored to the donor and by having a better idea of who is interested in what, you will more likely write a proposal that meets with their approval. Never go to a donor and ask, "What are you funding these days?" as this implies that all you are interested in is money. If one is not familiar with the donors or their activities, is it acceptable to call them and ask for their website or information brochure or even their funding guidelines.

With fundraising, it is usually of great advantage if the person asking for the money is known to the donor, although that does not mean that someone else having a stronger relationship with the donor than you should preclude you from being introduced. In fact, it is far healthier, once it has been established that the donor is going to be a long-term supporter of your organization or whatever, if that senior person, usually the boss, then passes the relationship on, therefore allowing it to be institutionalized. Discussion of this issue within an organizations is not, however, always easy.

Giving a benefit back to the donor is also very important. If, for example, a donor agrees to provide funds to build a school or sponsor students, you should be sure to recognize this person, thereby encouraging people who sometimes pledge money but then fail to ever write out the check to fulfill their commitments. In the case of the students, try to arrange for them to work with their sponsors in the summer, or come up with some other kind of linkage. If some people say that they cannot afford to pay a whole scholarship, the option would be group sponsoring; let people who have agreed to sponsor the students go and ask others to do the same; it can be very powerful when one person who is already doing something goes and asks someone else in the same line of work to do the same.

If the donor wants something to be included in the proposal, be sure to include it. It is also always good to take a look at the website of a possible funder - remember that the objective when you carry out research for fundraising policies is to only contact the foundations likely to help you, i.e., those who have either funded projects similar to yours in the past or who state in their purpose that these are the kinds of things they are interested in funding.

With regard to fundraising in the Palestinian context, it is important to remember that the Diaspora has always been there for local NGOs, and the more independent an organization wants to be, the more it should consider approaching external Palestinian sources. Perhaps Palestinians who are coming for visits during the summer should be targeted, shown what is going on and made to realize what a valuable contribution they could make. One must look at all the possibilities and decide which ones are the best given the current circumstances. Be realistic in everything you do for fundraising whether it is with someone in the community or from the Dias-

pora, or a company or foundation: establish a relationship, get them interested, and try not to be greedy or in too much of a hurry.

If a NGO is very specialized in its services or target audience, such as one providing plastic surgery for children, for example, it should focus on finding a few important people, preferably with a first-hand experience, (e.g., a family member who has some kind of disfiguration or had one but underwent surgery), and use a certain amount of tact in approaching potential donors, as many are uncomfortable with disabilities. Involving a popular artist, for example, in a campaign or as a spokesperson could prove very useful. It is important to emphasize to people that with a little bit of help, the children with whom the NGO is working could become full members of the society. The saying 'A picture is worth a hundred words' is usually true, but one has to know the audience. The 'shock approach' does not always work as many people will simply 'switch off' and then the message will be lost. One should always remember, however, that if a certain approach does not work, there is nothing to prevent one from trying something else.

PROPOSAL-WRITING TIPS

In any proposal, you should deal with the goals of your organization, the concept of the project, your organization's ability to undertake the project, the resources that you bring to it and those you would have to bring in from outside. You have to assess the need for the project in the community, which may involve gathering data.

Before you accept responsibility for writing a proposal, make sure that you will be supported by others in the organization who are responsible for sound program research, planning and budgeting, and a realistic implementation, evaluation and reporting plan. Something you should remember is that raising money is only ten percent writing and 90 percent thinking, strategizing, planning, focusing and doing research to ensure that the project that you want to do is a good one and that you are approaching the right organization/individual.

The first step in proposal development is not to decide who is giving the money for what, which is unfortunately how many board members and executive directors tend to see proposal writing, but to look at the reasons for your organization's existence, what you want to do, and what you need to do it, and then find a funding source that is already convinced of the importance of this kind of work or can be convinced that what you are doing is in their scope of work.

Proposal writing involves a lot of work, especially if one applies for funding from big foundations or USAID, including the collection of information on financial matters and documents pertaining to your legal status; in some cases an organization may have to fix or change its legal status and be registered in a certain way. USAID, for example, sometimes insists that an international accountant sets up the financial administration system for the organization.

The following tips will assist in the drafting of proposals:

Involve other staff in committing the project/program ideas and proposal components to paper and reaching consensus on program/project components. Make sure all relevant issues are addressed in the pre-writing phase. If you are seeking general program funding, make sure no important objectives or constituencies are omitted. If you are writing a project proposal, focus on the key elements required to achieve the stated goals. Talking to others may show that the original idea was not necessarily the best.

Research and cultivate the best prospective donors for the program/project before you start writing a proposal. Ask for their guidelines/deadlines, and send a 'letter of inquiry,' to learn if the potential donor is interested in your idea or not. Obtain a current, exact name/address to which you can send the proposal. Before sending it, always contact the organization first to check that your contact person is still the right person to approach. Sometimes you will simply be told to send it to the head of the organization.

Even though people might contribute to the proposal, always make sure that only one person does the **actual writing** to ensure that one single voice and style comes through as representing your organization. You might need to do a couple of drafts before coming up with something that is satisfactory.

Develop a schedule for completing and submitting proposals to different donors. Specify which staff are responsible for providing data, drafts or approvals, with deadlines. You need to follow what happened to the proposal, to find out who actually has it on their desk and when he/she will be able to give you some kind of answer.

Follow the donor's proposal guidelines, if any, closely, especially regarding any attachments to be included with the document. If none are given, include these components:

    1. *Cover Letter on Letterhead:* outlining the grant request and total amount of funding requested;

    2. *Body of the Proposal: (*usually 5-12 pages, total)

- *Summary:* of the proposal/request in one-two pages;

- *Introduction:* describing the organization's qualifications and establishing credibility in its field;

- *Statement of Need/Problem:* explains and documents why the program/project is needed, problems to be addressed, including examples of community support for the idea/program;

- *Program/Project Objectives:* what you expect to accomplish with the funding, in measurable terms;

- *Methods:* strategies, activities, constituencies and actors to be engaged in achieving the objectives;

- *Principal Staff:* identify experts or others in key positions, describe management structures;

- *Timetable:* the length of the project and its phases of activity, from beginning to end;

- *Evaluation:* describe a plan for determining the degree to which the activities achieved their objectives and for assessing the effectiveness of methods used;

- *Future/Other Funding Required:* describes your plan for how the project/program will continue or be expanded once the donor's grant period ends - you must demonstrate sustainability;

- *Budget Request:* restate the total amount requested from this donor and whether it is a one-time, multi-year or annual request;

- *Detailed Project Budget and an Overall Organizational Budget:* clearly delineating which costs will be covered by the requested grant and which will be provided by your organization or other sources.

3. Attachments, as Required by the Donor, or, at least: annual financial statement/auditors' report; document showing your legal status as an NGO/nonprofit organization; list of your board of directors and affiliations; list of major donors/amounts received in the last three years; and any other directly relevant brochure, news-clipping, or annual report.

Use concise, active-voice writing to make your case. Keep it simple and easy to read - use headings with subheadings. Avoid jargon, complicated data (footnotes are better) and fancy bindings. Attach only those items that will directly support your proposal.

13 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A MEDIA-COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Kathy Sullivan

TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGY

Most of the tools described below can be used in combination with others for greatest effectiveness, whether in conducting a concentrated 'public awareness' program or just implementing an annual plan. The more different methods are use to reach the same/different audiences, the more effective the programs will be.

Speakers' Bureaus: sending the best spokesperson out to talk at luncheons, professional and other meetings, on TV/radio, etc.; one should not wait to be asked but offer to send a speaker to a group the organization wants to influence or with whom it wants to cooperate. Speeches should be:

* prepared in advance
* informative, and
* tailored to the audience (what you want from them?)

Publications: including studies, newsletters, project profiles, annual reports, etc. - can be useful if chosen for the right audiences and reasons. Before going into details, there should be a word of warning: there are a lot of newsletters, so in launching a new one, one should make sure that there is a clear idea behind it and a certain group of addressees. One should never assume that a newsletter should be produced on a quarterly basis - twice a year is often enough. Another common mistake is that of investing in lots of colors etc. If you are with an organization that is organizing many activities and is keen to promote public awareness, then a newsletter is certainly important, but it really all depends on the audience. If your audience is mainly foreign donors and media, then sending them things by e-mail is often a good idea. Finally, do not hesitate to show colleagues what you write, because someone else might find a spelling mistake or a better word, or that what you have written does not appear to make sense. Be receptive to taking others' advice and reassess, reevaluate, revise your plan as needed. Finally, when you send out any piece of paper, you have to follow it up, either with a telephone call or a visit.

Special Events: these are not media events *per se* but events such as a public awareness campaign, which the media may cover and for which efforts should be made to get the press to attend. They can also be fund-raising events or used for certain marketing purposes at the same time. Basically, two major kinds can be differentiated: *social events* (e.g., concerts, dinners, walkathons, auctions, etc.), where people come together to do something enjoyable whilst learning something interesting, and *public information events,* where the focus is more on information (e.g., seminars, workshops, conferences, study releases, writing/art/slogans contests, etc.).

In organizing an event one should think about the mood in the given society and whether a certain activity would be acceptable or frowned upon. For example, Palestinians here during the *Intifada* – and for many this is still true – were not used to going out, not only because of the manifold problems, but also because they were simply 'not in the mood'.

Media Events[1]: For each message the appropriate event should be chosen and used. News or press conferences, however, should not be convened if a briefing or news release would do.

Media Materials[2]: These include news releases, news/information kits, appeal letters, fact sheets, quotable statements, brochures, and all kinds of publications that target a certain audience and try to get the organization's message across. Distribution means include hand outs, mail, e-mail, internet (websites), fax, etc.

Professionally Produced 'Social Marketing' Materials or PSAs: they cost money (maybe you can get donated production services but needs good tight writing/concepts), so it is cheaper to convince people who write and produce popular dramas/comedies for TV, film or theater to include your issues in their scripts in a way that could influence the public! (Media analysis studies are a very effective way to lobby for better coverage of your issue/constituency in the media.)

Traditional and Non-Journalist-Oriented Communications Media: the use of more traditional low-tech media like banners, posters, balloons, pins, T-shirts and handbills/flyers should not be underestimated, especially in mobilizing a neighborhood or community. Interesting symbols/logos related to these items may attract the interest of the media, too (as the 'women in black' phenomenon has demonstrated). On the other hand, if no one has ever used newspaper inserts in your community, you could try that and gain a lot of attention as a pioneer.

---

[1] For details see the annex 'Major Types of Media Events'.

[2] For details see the annex 'Tool Box of Media Materials'.

MAKING THE NEWS AND GETTING ATTENTION

Whatever your medium, spend time thinking of symbols/stories that will make your issue come alive/stay memorable for others. Think of simple visual tags to which you can develop strong written/verbal linkages. Think of the poppy symbol for fallen soldiers in World War I/II; the red looped ribbon that is now an international symbol for AIDS research/cure supporters; or the yellow shirts/dresses worn by Mrs. Aquino and her supporters as they campaigned to topple the Marcos machine in the Philippines. Choose symbols that resonate amongst your most important key publics (local will be different than international). Use the symbol/logo on everything.

Take advantage of special dates/places that relate to your issue when planning special/media events. The more aspects of your event directly relate to your issue, the more it will appear 'worth covering' and the more it will communicate to your publics.

The following are some of the tools or options that can be used in order to make the news:

- Create controversy. Take a stand. Disagree. Issue a provocative but logical statement supported by facts and/or experience.
- Become an expert in something and promote your expertise among the media.
- Conduct and release a reliable study, poll or survey on a timely issue.
- Involve proven media-magnet VIPs in your activities.
- Turn out the masses. Develop a constituency, serve its interests and represent it well.
- Open channels to new or rarely heard voices through your members, volunteers, constituents, beneficiaries.
- Develop a thoughtful, articulate and visually appealing spokesperson who can speak dynamically in 20-second bites.
- Do something unexpected. Stop traffic.
- Screw up in a big way or perform a miracle.
- Define a problem or a mystery, then solve it.
- Create a powerful symbol/identity for your issue/constituency and use it in every communication/activity.
- Document your work: take photos, slides, videotape; keep good statistical and financial records; publish accurate reports; collect success stories and quotes from people affected by your work.
- Share reliable information and contacts with media representatives generously, even when your organization is not the focus of a story.
- Create and maintain the most up-to-date media list in town and follow-up every media contact by phone.

- Gain a reputation for providing both great refreshments and 'real news' at your media events.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Methods for developing strategies and plans vary and usually it takes some time for the individual to find out which method works best. There are certain times when you would pay to advertise versus try to get yourself covered as a news event: for example, when it is a political message and you do not have time to organize an event or something in order to get covered as news; when you are putting out a request for services, a bid, a proposal or something like that; when you want to put at a sort of issues-oriented message that is not news, or something that is highly personal or commercial; in the case of a vacancy; or if you have a product or service that people are going to have to pay for, even an event where people are expected to buy tickets. Sometimes companies take out ads to say what they do for the community to boost their image, and for this, of course, they are expected to pay. As in many other areas, you are restricted by how much money you have to spend.

The first thing you have to look at always is the targeted audience; the more you know it, the more effective your message is going to be. The contact history is also important: Have you sent these people messages before, even ones that differ from the type of message that you are currently thinking of sending? What does the targeted audience already know or think they know about you or your issue? How do they spend their time and their money? What do they read, listen to, watch on TV? Try to create an image or a profile of the people you are trying to talk to or sell to. It is always helpful to test an idea on people who are representative of the group that is being dealt with before actually going to the production phase. This may involve something as formal as inviting people to a roundtable to comment on what you are trying to do.

Once the plan for a the product, service, or event is in place ask yourself what its strengths and weaknesses are and consider the opportunities for promoting it and any possible threats. After defining the audience and working environment the next step is the message itself, i.e., the concepts or visual images and key words that shall be incorporated. In the majority of cases, visual and verbal imagery working together serve as a very powerful tool.

Finally there is also the question of channels/media outlets and timing. When is something to be released, how many times and over what period of time? You need to think about the exact placement and, for example, in the case of a TV ad, whether it shall show up right after the evening news – the most expensive time – when most people are watching television. If you are addressing a women's issue and a newspaper has a women's section, then this might be the best place to put the ad.

In order to keep to schedules and deadlines, creating a monthly calendar format can prove very useful, in which things can be slotted in like this:

- Look at any known deadlines (annual report or newsletter publication dates, board meetings or VIP visits), special dates (relevant religious or national holidays, international or UN 'days', organizational anniversaries, openings, etc) and put them into your plan first. Think of the best way to use these hooks to promote your issue among key publics and the media. For example, B'Tselem was very clever in combining the launch of its quarterly *Human Rights in the Occupied Territories* with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: they did not just complain about what is happening in Palestine, but instead took one of the articles of the Declaration and pointed to its stipulation that "no one shall be deprived of liberty and security of person…" and then proceeded to prove, with the help of a photograph showing two dead guys in a truck, that the reality of the current situation in Palestine stands in stark contrast to this demand.[3]

- Include 'housekeeping'/administrative work you must do: creating and updating media, donor and other mailing list databases, mission statements and other basic pieces; preparing for board meetings.

- Add one or two new events: one special/fundraising event, one media event, relating to the above, and decide which materials you need to execute them. Back up and create timelines of deadlines for different planning and implementing phases of each event, including committees and other staff who will help.

- Include targets for visits/outreach to other organizations, potential donors, media contacts. Add speeches; ones made by your Executive Director or others will do.

- Find the 'slow periods' when there may be less going on in the organization and in the community. Is there something you could do with the public or media at that time to keep your issues in the spotlight? Maybe now would be a good time to cultivate press contacts, update databases of donors/media contacts, or improve your photo files. When is a good time to do some 'media training' for your boss or colleagues?

- Allow some 'white time' for the unexpected crisis, event, or occasion that you did not/could not plan for. It will come up and destroy your plan!

- Take this plan to your boss/executive board. Discuss it and note priorities and less critical issues. Revise it and research any special costs/ need for outside resources. Make sure you have the budget/staff to implement it. Agree to review the plan on a monthly basis with your boss. You will change it as you go along: remember it is a plan not a contract.

- Be realistic: do not overload your plate and do not bite off more than you can chew. Allow time to think, write and get approvals of drafts, and printing, etc. If there is something that you have not tried before, try it first on a small scale on a sort of 'select audience' and ask them for feedback. Do not pack your year with activities so that if something unexpected happens, everything falls apart; check the plan on a monthly basis to see if any changes need to be made.

---

[3] The B'Tselem Quarterly, the first issue of its kind, was distributed as a supplement in the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* in English.

PART III:

MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

- EXPERIENCES FROM PALESTINE

14 PUBLIC RELATIONS: EXPERIENCES FROM PALESTINE

Dr. Albert Aghazarian[1]

What exactly constitutes public relations? Suppose that thugs attack an institution. The director might hide under the table, but the PR person will go out there and get knifed, even though a week later in the ceremony to mark the 'glorious triumph' the boss will get all the credit. A good PR person never challenges the authority, not because he or she is a coward, but because PR means supporting the system.

Being in a second line acting position actually has some advantages. In life, I have learned that one can be creative or one can follow the ground rules and that creative people, Mahmoud Darwish for example, usually ignore ground rules. I think one of the essences of PR is *tafseel,* which has two meanings in Arabic: to go into detail, and to tailor or cut according to the shape. Public relations is not one size fits all, which is why I did not come here with a written text and why, based on a certain expression, or something that is said, I might change the whole course of my presentation.

Detail is vitally important. We just held an international conference that could match anything held elsewhere in the world, and the secret of its success was detail. Detail means you have to calculate everything: if we are sitting here and we are smoking, we have to calculate that after half an hour there will be too much smoke in the room; if I am sitting here being interviewed for the TV, we have to consider the view behind me and whether it is fitting or not. At least 60 percent of the success of a conference can usually be attributed to the little things that constitute the outside appearance. It is extremely important to go into as much detail as you can.

Public relations is not just a craft, it is a vision, a philosophy of life. You are all aware of the political trends in Palestinian society and you know I am a civil servant in my official function, which means I am like a bus operator who tells you that the first bus leaves at 8.05, the first stop is at 8.20, it costs 1 NIS per passenger, the bus is clean and insured, and I do not care a damn who boards that bus as long as the conditions are met. The truth of the matter is, we cannot build a civil society without having civil servants. Of course, I have my ideas, but in my official capacity, I am primarily a civil servant carrying out my tasks.

Having said that, there are times when people resort to violent methods and one has to stop and be prepared to fight, and fight brutally if need be.

---

[1] Dr. Albert Aghazarian is the Director of Public Relations at Birzeit University.

Currently, my only problem is with certain self-righteous people from the left; I am saying this against the background of an angry incident during which they held an Israeli team for almost three hours, which was totally unacceptable. Basically, it was one student who was responsible for something that could have resulted in Israeli or Palestinian forces entering the university and the destruction of the entire establishment, regardless of the fact that the future of our society lies in the Law Center at Birzeit, which is not a faculty of law, but the backbone of legislation in Palestine.

I think that in Arab society in general and Palestinian society in particular, there are three prevailing viruses, the first of which is stardom. In my experience, nothing affects one's behavior as much as fame, especially through the TV. Margaret Thatcher spent over two hours sitting in my house, but so what? When I was through with her I went to a coffeehouse at Jaffa Gate and sat playing cards with taxi drivers, and I enjoyed it just as much. The beauty of PR is that you deal with the manager and cleaners of a place with almost an equal rhythm and equal respect.

The second virus in Palestinian society is 'shopocracy' (the rule of shops), meaning it is fashionable today for a charismatic character to come up with a charismatic project which then revolves around that one particular person. The project could be implemented well and be of great value, or it could be implemented badly and be of no value whatsoever, but people accept it because of who is in charge. If, at Birzeit today, all the work has stopped because I am here lecturing at PASSIA, then I am doing a lousy job. If, on the other hand, someone is taking care of everything, that is an indication that I am doing my job well.

The third virus is 'bickering'. Suppose I want something from Jordan TV and I go to Rami Khouri and somewhere there says, "Rami Khouri is nothing, you should deal with me"; by saying this, he is acting in a way that is selfish and clearly not in the best interests of his organization.

I know a lady who is the leading expert in the world on Burmese emeralds, and this woman used to enter the jungles of Africa and give a child a chocolate or cake and receive a crude emerald in return. I once asked her, "Suppose I wanted to join you in the jet-set world and deal with diamonds, would you allow me?" She told me that first she would need to see my breaking point, going on to say that people, like gems, all have breaking points. She said there are people who will run away with 50 dollars or a tiny diamond and there are those who will only consider running away with a million dollars or a huge and flawless diamond, but there is no one who, at some point or another, will not think of stealing. I absolutely agree.

I then asked the woman if she experiences any differences in her dealings with people of different cultures. "Sure," she said, "the most practical people to deal with are the English, who know what they want, have an idea of the price, and are keen to make the sale. With the French, on the other hand, you have to endure a three-hour dinner before any mention of the business at hand is even made. With Arabs, it is a game; first of all the Arab will only be interested in what is being sold if he is interested in the seller, and from then on it is nothing but a game. As for the Japanese, you have to practically throw them on the floor and say let us make a deal." I did not really understand what she meant until I was once sitting next to an

Arabic-speaking senior Japanese diplomat during a dinner in Jakarta, and I mentioned what this woman had said about the Japanese. At first, he said that he did not know what the woman was talking about, but a few drinks later, he said something along the lines of, "Look, you want to sell me some napkins, take your money, and go home. As a Japanese businessman, I will ask you, how many napkins can you produce and how many boxes do you have now? Then, when you tell me that you have a truckload, I will buy the whole truckload there on the spot but whilst telling you that you have no right to sell to anyone else. In other words, I sort of hijack your decision-making process. Moreover, I will allow you to cheat once, but never twice." It is quite amazing to consider the differences, not only between cultures but also between people. I would add at this point that it is very important to treat everyone as an individual. I often forget faces, but I would never admit to it or say, "I recognize your face, but I cannot remember your name."

I was once very determined to visit Iraq but was keen to wait for an opportunity to go there without being associated with the dictator. So, I went in 1992 to a conference and made the discovery that the Iraqi people is a people that displays the peak of humanity and civilization and the peak of cruelty. What I mean is that if you approach an Iraqi in the proper manner, he will give you the last piece of bread in his house and starve to death himself, whereas if you make him hate you, he could slaughter you without batting an eyelid. The other day someone hit my car from the back and immediately turned around and started yelling that I was responsible for the accident; two minutes later, he was helping me to push the car in the rain, simply because I had responded to him in what I considered to be the most appropriate manner.

Three elements should exist in any operation. To begin with, one should be aware – and here I mean employers and employees alike – that there are punishments and rewards. Second, there should be respect. Third, and more important than the other two, one should be aware that in order to earn respect, one has to improve one's knowledge.

Certain people look for comfort and pleasure whilst others enjoy intensity. Personally, I am at my best when I am under pressure and I feel more vitalized. For example, I headed the Palestinian peace center at the Madrid Peace Conference and, despite working 20 hours a day, never felt tired, even though I slept for 14 hours when everything was over. Yasser Arafat, even at his age, does an incredible amount of traveling, and I truly believe that, putting aside our political positions, we are not doing much compared to him.

If you want to be the president of your organization, look for another job. Public relations is a supporting job, a logistics job, and you should never claim to know more than your boss nor say "I told you but you did not listen or implement what I told you to implement"; you are in his service and he will allow you to do what you want only if you make this very clear to him. Look at Arafat for example. Even when surrounded by thugs, he makes it very clear that he is the boss, which means should I decide to go and tell him that he need to build a strong civil society, I have to leave no doubt in his mind that I consider him our beloved leader.

I personally believe that Birzeit is an experiment in civil society, and one that has succeeded; the Islamic groups have been incorporated within the system and we are making it very clear to the Authority that we can be of most help if we are allowed to maintain our relative autonomy. I have always appreciated the relationship between the BBC and the British government: the BBC is an independent body that, in spite of getting its money from the British Government, does not wait for instructions from the office of Mr. Tony Blair when it comes to preparing the news or an editorial; the people that work there do so in the knowledge that although the choice of topics is up to them, their choice inevitably serves British interests and promotes the British image.

With regard to the issue of human rights, frankly I see two versions of human rights activists here. There is one group, including people like Bassem Eid and Raji Sourani, which I personally do not respect, and there is another, including people like Abdul Rahman Abu Arafeh and Ali Jirbawi in the Independent Committee, which I do respect because the members of this group criticize in order to rectify, not in order to condemn. Speaking as an educator, I say that if someone makes a mistake and you slap him, your objective should not be to hurt him, but to prevent him from making that same mistake in the future. If I say that everything that the Authority is doing is bad, I am not being positive in any sense. With all due respect to Edward Said, it is easy for him to constantly criticize the Authority whilst sitting in Columbia; I, on the other hand, cannot afford to do so, especially as I want to be functional and to contribute. Working in public relations involves far more than performing mechanically: it has to do with a vision that you develop and strengthen.

Afif Safieh, our Representative in London, decided that instead of sending stupid Christmas cards this year he would distribute 10,000 copies of a special brochure *Voices from Jerusalem* to which I, for the second year running, contributed. After mentioning our lengthy personal relationship, I analyzed the current political situation and I showed that it stinks. Why does it stink? Because the division in Israel is not over different approaches to the Palestine problem, but the result of different approaches to asserting Jewish hegemony over Palestine and facilitating the continuation of the concept of a land with no people; in other words, over how to continue the process of denial. As far as I am concerned, there is a real need for 'healing', but the healing process requires that Zionists throughout the world realize that this land was not empty as they claim. Even people from the so-called Left, such as Peres, when talking about separation are talking about it from a position that is characterized by disgust – we are sending you out so that we do not become a bi-national state, in other words, you are germs, you are microbes, so we do not mind throwing you out. As someone who deals on a day to day basis with young people from 18 to 25, I do not believe that we have the legitimate right to tell them that we can do nothing to change this position. What we have to do is to set for ourselves achievable targets. One important thing to remember is that anyone working in PR has to believe in the commodity; just like a good writer, you have to believe in what you write about or what you promote.

With regard to the declaration of statehood, you do not announce a state; you build it stone by stone, step by step, each one in its right place. Why are we, as an Arab and Islamic nation, marginalized? Why does this whole

region, from Afghanistan to Morocco, not count? Why do the five million people living here not count? I personally believe that this is also a public relations issue. As far as the 'success' of Zionism goes, most of the credit should go to the Arab national movement. The Zionists say that all the world ever wanted to do was to annihilate the Jews who, be they rich or poor, ultra-religious or ultra-agnostic, constitute one people. This, according to any established school of thought is absolute nonsense, yet it becomes a reality when we respond by saying, "Therefore, we are going to set out to get you all." We are the ones who should be blamed for making a reality out of a myth. Netanyahu is a clever man, and he knows about all the contradictions that exist. If a suicide attack takes place, he is completely at ease with the situation because it is a clear case of 'us against them' and he can concentrate on furthering the image of the Palestinians as terrorists without dealing with all the gray areas. In all situations, you have black and you have white, but what is more important is that you also have gray areas, which is what really counts.

Engaging in the process of king-making is more exciting that actually being the king. I often find that having a good relationship with a restaurant waiter, for example, can actually be more beneficial than having one with the owner. It is very important to establish connections and to know how to deal with people. If you deal with people in an honest and respectful manner, using nice words, etc., it can open doors for you that would otherwise remain closed.

DISCUSSION

Question: If my boss does not have the faintest idea about the importance of public relations, how can I be sure that even after telling him my plan and being told, "Yes, go ahead and carry it out," he will not turn around later and embarrass me in front of others?

Albert Aghazarian: If you are unassuming he will not hurt you, no matter who he is. Sometimes, Rami [Khouri], who has known me for 20 years, visits Hanna Nasser, the President of Birzeit University and he will sometimes look at me while addressing the president; I immediately look towards the president, which is my way of signaling to Rami that he should be looking at him, not at me, because if he keeps looking in my direction the president will not like it. If Rami continues looking in my direction, then I will go out and make sure that the coffee is ready or the door is closed, thereby reinforcing my message. Never try to surpass or go above the head of your director. Never get above yourself and think that are more important than the director is.

Question: But does working in PR not involve a lot of hypocrisy? For example, how could anyone go to Arafat and talk to him in flowery terms, calling him our "beloved president" etc, knowing deep inside that the president is not 'beloved' and that he personally hates him?

Albert Aghazarian: It is not that simple.

Question: Suppose that you have a big event, and your boss assigns a committee to help you prepare for that event, but in the end you discover

that you are doing all the work because the members of the committee feel that as a PR man, it is your job to do everything. Is that okay? Are you supposed to complain about that?

Albert Aghazarian: Not only would I do everything, but also I would thank the members of the committee who did not even show up to help for their participation. Unfortunately, that is the way it goes, because part of my job is to make the committee seem important.

Question: But should not everyone be equal and mix and help each other out, not just at work, but in the society?

Albert Aghazarian: Amira Hess, an Israeli journalist who spent three years living in Gaza wanted to join the Arabic studies course at Birzeit, but we decided that there was no good reason for us to accept her at a time when our professors were unable to reach the library of the Hebrew University. During my one and only visit to Yad Veshem, they brought us a German-Jewish professor who said, after speaking about what the Jews had gone through at the hands of the Germans, "but I do not feel that the Palestinians owe me anything." I instantly turned around and said, "It is more like a case of what you owe the Palestinians!" Just look at the way in which they tread on us and then turn around and say, "It is okay, I don't want anything from you." Of course they do not; it is the Jews who owe us.

Rami Khouri: Working for Birzeit, is there one specific image or message that you would like to project, or do you send different messages to different people: the Americans, the Israelis, the Arabs, etc?

Albert Aghazarian: It is a bit like a factory: you have the main production and you have the special packages. The main production that I sell is the idea that universities are places where in addition to teaching you conduct experiments in pluralism, in diversity, in civic society, in transparency. In the case of Birzeit, this is an experiment that has clearly worked, judging by the fact that even students from the Islamic bloc are now playing according to the rules of law, having been successfully incorporated within the system.

15 MEDIA-COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: THE PALESTINIAN EXPERIENCE (1)

Dr. Nabil Khatib

When I was asked to speak about the Palestinian media-communication strategy, I said that according to my understanding it does not exist and that it would therefore be extremely hard for me to talk about it! Nevertheless, I am going to present a couple of case studies, which should give you some idea about the Palestinian experience in this field.

I will start with two stories that involve me personally. In 1986, I was a new journalism graduate and had just returned home. I was working as a correspondent for the northern areas - Nablus, Jenin, etc. - with *Al-Fajr* newspaper, one of Palestine's famous newspapers, which expressed the view of the PLO; that is, before it was closed in 1996. One day, we received information concerning a female patient in a hospital in Jenin who had been mistakenly declared dead and put in the refrigerator, even though she was actually still alive, as was discovered the next day. Unfortunately, the poor woman died shortly afterwards because of her ordeal. This was an important story, which the public had the right to hear, but it was also a story that had the potential to harm certain people because anyone hearing it would demand that those involved be fired. In other words, they would try to bring about a positive change. Certainly, both the hospital and the doctor most immediately concerned were keen to keep their names out of the papers and to escape any repercussions.

Being fully aware of the sensitivity of the issue, my colleagues and I went to great lengths to ensure that the information we had received was correct and that we were not simply dealing with a case of a relative of someone who had died under normal circumstances trying to make someone 'pay' for his or her loss. Once we were convinced of the authenticity of our information we sent the story to be published, only to be told that it had to be scrapped. When we asked why, we were told that according to a certain Palestinian strategy, it is illogical to declare to the whole world that we have defects like these, thereby allowing the Israelis to turn around and say, "If they can't even manage their medical affairs, how could they possibly manage a state?" The direction followed by the Palestinian political elite that was responsible for Palestinian journalism at that time was that such issues should not be tackled.

The second example concerns the events of only a few days ago. An Israeli settler slaughtered a Palestinian called Osama An-Natsheh in At-Thori neighborhood. According to the initial information we received, An-Natsheh

had been 'stabbed' - as anyone would admit, from the linguistic point of view, there is a world of difference between being 'stabbed' and being 'slaughtered'. Many people, if provoked enough, are capable of stabbing someone, but to slaughter someone requires a great deal of callousness and a far greater readiness to kill. In this particular instance, it was very clear that the assailant was motivated not only by nationalistic ideas but also by a heightened criminal readiness to commit murder.

Several hours after the killing, some students from Birzeit who were protesting against the plight of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails started stoning cars with Israeli identification plates near Bet El. I was there at the time, and I remember counting five TV cameras, three of which belonged to international stations. When a young Israeli soldier, a passenger in a settler car, was dragged from the vehicle and beaten, footage of the incident was distributed very quickly – in about half an hour – and was sent directly through satellite from Ramallah to London, contrary to usual procedure; usually it is sent to Jerusalem and edited first.

The next day, when I opened the newspapers I was annoyed but not surprised to discover that the dominant story was the so-called 'attack' on the soldier, even though the Israelis admitted he had sustained only minor injuries. Of course the shots of him being beaten were somewhat dramatic, but that did not change the fact that his injuries were only very minor, whereas four hours earlier in Jerusalem an Arab had been slaughtered – not simply murdered – and yet hardly any mention of his death was made. According to the generally accepted idea that someone being murdered is more newsworthy than someone being mildly injured – unless the person who is injured happens to be very important – the media, in this instance, had clearly let the public down, especially as the murder was characterized by both criminal and nationalistic tendencies on the part of the assailant. The overall result was that on this particular day of struggle, Israel was the winner from the media point of view, because the minor injuries sustained by the soldier, who was armed, had taken precedence over the slaughter by an Israeli settler of an unarmed Palestinian from Jerusalem.

Another thing that attracted my attention was that although the soldier had been armed, he had not attempted, as is normal practice in such situations, to fire at the students. Nor, having dragged him from the car, did the students attempt to injure him seriously, let alone kill him. Unfortunately, the public did not see some of the students trying to help the soldier escape, nor was any mention made of the fact that they had taken his rifle, not in order to kill him but in order to stop him from firing at them. There was clearly, amongst all the confusion, a subconscious decision on the part of the students to refrain from seriously harming the soldier.

The day after the incident, I personally heard declarations by 12 Israeli ministers about what had happened and I know that the ministerial council watched the tape four times and then took a decision to stop the negotiations and that nobody contested the decision as most people, by that time, had seen the footage. On the other hand, nobody said a single word about what had happened in At-Thori.

The reason why I gave these two examples is as follows: the first example is relative to the internal Palestinian media policy while the second one is relative to the media policy with regard to the whole world.

Today, the reality is that we have three Palestinian daily newspapers, whereas in the 1920s and 1930s there were 125 daily, weekly and monthly periodicals. Like in all the countries of Bilad Ash-Sham, there was a strong cultural movement in this country, and had we not been occupied, the advanced situation of the media might have continued. In 1948, when the country was divided, the cultural centers were Haifa and Jaffa, and there was also considerable activity in Jerusalem and Nablus. Those who were forced to flee to Lebanon and Syria published a few small clandestine publications on the necessity of preparing for the battle as Palestinians, but in Egypt or Gaza, the feeling was that Palestine was the issue of all Arabs. Accordingly, the consensus was that Palestinians should not publish newspapers and raise Palestinian interests and problems as Palestinians. When the West Bank was united with Jordan, there was a debate concerning whether someone living there should publish a newspaper according to his status as a citizen in this united country or as a Palestinian who still has a problem to be solved. The result was that there was no Palestinian newspaper illustrating Palestinian concerns and afflictions, with the exception of *Al-Ittihad*, which was transformed from a Palestinian newspaper into an Israeli newspaper but which dealt with 'inside' Palestinians' concerns.

In 1967 when the contemporary Palestinian revolution was prominent, there was a heated debate going on about whether or not we should publish our newspapers and accept being subject to the Israeli military censorship. Another debate concerned the fact that the Palestinian resistance had decided that if newspapers were to be published, then it wanted to finance them. Many people at that time believed that politics start from firearms and that community work is secondary. So, after 1967, the only newspaper that resumed publication - after being renamed - was *Al-Quds,* now as a newspaper that dealt with the Palestinian issue in the framework of the Palestinian problem with a new vision – the right of self-determination, etc. The *Al-Fajr* and *Ash-Sha'ab* newspapers were only published in 1972, i.e., it took us five years to agree on this issue.

The problem faced then was that there were not any real journalists, only political activists. *Al-Fajr,* for example, was financed by a given faction, so those responsible for funding it would find people who shared the faction's point of view and whose written Arabic language was acceptable. So the 'journalists' actually started writing propaganda and not news, but even then, the attempts to mobilize people through the media were not always successful because all the material had to go to the Israeli military censor. It was due to this censorship that issues with which the censor was not particularly concerned, such as the Palestinian disputes with Jordan, Egypt and Syria, usually took precedence over the problems between the Palestinians and Israel. This problem was complicated by our leadership's lack of belief in the role of the media and the tendency to avoid publishing details of shortcomings in order to prove that the Palestinian nation deserved to survive.

In the 1980s, awareness of the importance of community work increased further, but the newspapers remained in the framework of the political parties that financed them. Thus, the supply of information to the public was very selective, and articles about the activities of the local organizations that supplied an alternative flow of information to that coming from Israel, which was often inaccurate, were only few and far between.

During the *Intifada* things changed and finally a local leadership emerged that was able to speak its mind without fear of being punished and that was in direct contact with the 'outside'. We could go and ask Faisal Husseini, or Dr. Abdul Hadi, or Sari Nusseibeh, "What do you think about this or that aspect of the Question of Jerusalem" and be provided with a local Palestinian perspective, which was something entirely new. Since telephone interviews with Abu Ammar or others in the leadership were forbidden, these local sources of information became all the more important. At the end of the *Intifada*, that same local personalities started to speak openly, and many of them became negotiators. This resulted in news about the negotiations coming not from Tunis, but from Jerusalem, and foreign journalists taking their information from their Palestinian counterparts. This situation continued until the arrival of the PNA.

Today, we have other types of problems. First, there is still Israeli military censorship in Jerusalem and other areas still under occupation. Second, there is a very unclear situation in the territories under the PNA: many newspapers were closed (e.g., *Ash-Sha'ab, Al-Fajr*), while new ones (e.g., *Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeedah* and *Al-Ayyam*) and a Palestinian TV and radio station were established. In short, a whole new structure emerged while the original one, excluding *Al-Quds* newspaper, was destroyed.

Under the PNA, the media is no longer subject to two authorities, but it is not that one no longer exists or was replaced, rather that there has been a 'juxtaposition' of the two. Accordingly, *Al-Quds* newspaper, for example, will take into consideration both the view of the Israeli military censorship as well as that of the PNA. This even applies to *Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeedah,* which is printed in the PNA territory, because it is distributed in Israel and it will pass through Israel on its way to Gaza.

After the arrival of the PNA in 1994, Palestinian journalists were third in the list of groups of people being imprisoned by the PNA, the first and second being collaborators and members of the Islamic opposition respectively. Between July 1994 and July 1995 alone 13 journalists were imprisoned. One of the main problems is the number of laws being applied: Ottoman laws, the British martial laws of 1933 and 1935, the Jordanian laws that even Jordan has stopped using, the Egyptian laws in Gaza, and the Israeli military laws. Until today we have judges that refer back to Ottoman laws.

Accordingly, our main request, following the lobbying of some Palestinian decision-makers by the Palestinian Journalists Forum, was that a single Press Law be issued so that we would know our rights and responsibilities. The Press and Publications Law was the fifth law to be formulated by the PNA. It raised a lot of debate because on one hand it annulled all the previous laws and eliminated the direct censorship, whilst, on the other hand, there were certain 'foggy' articles that imposed some sort of 'self censor-

ship' on the journalists and their editors-in-chief. During the press conference that dealt with the new law, held by the Minister of Information, Yasser Abed Rabbo, the editor of *Al-Quds*, Maher Ash-Sheikh, said "It is better for me to have a censor, instead of making a 'mistake' and then being thrown in prison because of it."

For example, the Palestinian Press Law exposes to punishment everyone who publishes anything that harms the national Palestinian unity. But what exactly is 'the national Palestinian unity'? The law forbids harming something without even determining what it is. It also ignores the fact that the national good of 1936, or 1948, or 1967, or 1974, or the Madrid period, the Oslo period, etc. is different to the national good of today.

One of the most dangerous aspects of the Press Law is the article that gives any judge the right to oblige a journalist to uncover his/her sources, which often, and quite understandably, results in a lack of willingness on the part of potential sources to divulge information.

I think the Press Law is a positive step forward; not all journalists approve of it, but it was the best compromise that could be reached. One should not forget that there was a dispute over it in the Cabinet, which regarded it as very accommodating to the journalists. The outcome is that the newspapers do not apply many of the articles, while there are a lot of articles that correspond to the rights of journalists that are also not applied, which is why the process of putting journalists into prison continues, albeit to a lesser degree than before.

The PNA committed itself not to arrest any journalist unless the order comes from the highest level, not just from security personnel. We all know, however, the story of *Al-Quds* journalist Ala' Mashharawi from Gaza, who was arrested six times by six different security apparatuses for the same reason, simply because of the pressure being exerted on the PNA at the time as a result of Hamas' operations. What happened was that the President asked who was responsible for the press release concerning Hamas taking responsibility for the operations from Gaza. When he was told it was Mashharawi, he demanded that he be brought in for questioning, so poor Mashharawi would be released by one security apparatus, only to be arrested by another.

From the media point of view, the current situation is very complex, and the political dimension is only one problem; there is also an economic dimension, which is related to the way in which the Palestinian economy affects the local press. When an economy is strong, the number of advertisements increases, which means that the newspapers are able to depend on themselves, develop, and pay higher salaries. What has happened in Palestine is that the bad economic situation has obliged the newspapers to rely heavily on news agencies as an inexpensive source of information, even though the agencies are not concerned with local issues.

The third problem is a professional one that cannot be changed by a law, nor by a presidential decree, nor by a decision from the Journalists' Association. It is a problem related to the accumulation of ethical and professional morals of journalists that require tens of years to change.

Is the Palestinian media capable of playing its role in controlling the public institutions, whether governmental or non-governmental, and at the same time guarantee the flow of objective information and pass it on to people? To answer this, one only has to consider the following figures: the level of distribution of newspapers in developing countries is 80 per 1,000 of potential readers on average, in Africa, 50 per 1,000, but here in Palestine, the figure is only 20-30 per 1,000. Even though our country is characterized by a high political interest, there is a very low interest in the newspapers, which probably results from the public's view that the newspapers fail to provide them with enough reliable information or act as 'supervisors' with regard to the performance of the public institutions.

During the period leading up to the election some colleagues and I prepared a weekly publication called *The People and the Elections* because we felt that the elections were not being covered properly. The organizations that were most interested in following up what was being published on women candidates or women's issues in general were the Women's Study Center and the WATC (Women's Affairs Technical Committee). Both tried to influence what we published, saying "You have said such and such, now we want you to print our point of view," which, in many cases, we did. The way they followed the media and tried to control the flow of information, sending letters asking us to do something or else condemning something we published earned them our respect. It also showed that change requires social interactions, not only the making of decisions.

The Voice of Women, which is published by the WATC, is considered a tool that can be used to influence and mobilize the public, but a look at the first 15 volumes reveals rather unsuccessful public relations work. The mistake the NGOs are committing in their publications is that they write only about their activities - e.g., Zahira Kamal met so and so, this female activist did such and such, a training program took place here and there, etc. - which do not really interest the general public or the media. If the NGOs want to make use of the media, they should employ public relations people who understand how the media works.

It is time that we make an effort to ensure that an entirely new generation of journalists emerges; now, most journalists are former political activists, and third-year journalism students at Birzeit, for example, are actually far more active than the 'real' journalists. One of my students visited Jericho three times to cover the casino story, at her own expense, whereas not one of the 'real' journalists did the same thing.

The Ministry of Information has issued 22 permits to different organizations for newspapers and journals. The PNA itself is spending money on three newspapers and is sponsoring another three dailies. If the opposition or the civil society organizations do not publish a newspaper or any other form of publication in order to control what the PNA is doing, then the PNA will continue to do exactly whatever it likes. The new generation will, it is hoped, bring new changes.

16 MEDIA-COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: THE PALESTINIAN EXPERIENCE (2)

Terry Boullata[1]

I worked from 1995 to 1997 with the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC), which is a coalition of women's grassroots organizations and study centers. It then represented the only lobbying center for women's rights at a time when the country was undergoing incredible political and social changes - changes that included, amongst other things, the first elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).

Women played an important role in introducing new rights for women during the aforementioned period. The WATC's strategy consisted of *lobbying* – working toward trying to influence decision-makers – and *campaigning* – widening the circle of people interested in a particular issue, which together represent the democratic way of introducing change. Of course, one's personal relationships play an important role in both lobbying and campaigning, because it is always easier to influence a decision-maker who is known to you.

Using this strategy, the Palestinians began preparing for the PLC elections in 1995 by introducing the Palestinian Election Law. From the beginning, we lobbied to have a woman representative in the committee dealing with the new law, in order to guarantee that we would have access to information about what was being discussed. This was very important in order to ensure that the committee knew our input and comments concerning the law.

At the same time, we were busy campaigning, encouraging all Palestinians, but particularly women, to be a part of this important first step towards full democracy, one that would determine many if not all of the political decisions to come. It was not easy to convince women to participate in the elections as they regarded voting as a totally new, somewhat complicated, and even unnecessary experience. For many, their apprehension was combined with a fear of incurring the wrath of their fathers, husbands or other family members by 'daring' to go and cast their vote in what is, after all, still a male-dominated society.

---

[1] Terry Boullata is currently working with the Austrian Center in the Old City of Jerusalem. She has been an activist involved in women's organizations for many years.

In fact, there was a real problem in the villages at one point because the women were being told by their male relatives that under no circumstances were they to go and vote. Others, meanwhile, were being told, "Okay, you can go and vote, but only if you vote for the person that I am voting for." In fact, the same thing was happening, but to a lesser extent in the towns and cities. In spite of the fact that the women there enjoy relatively more freedom, some were afraid of being accused of 'shaming' their families by voting.

Campaigning has many elements, such as the holding of workshops and lectures and the preparing of leaflets, posters, and small studies to provide would-be voters with some basic and some not-so-basic information relevant to the issue in question. It also involves making good use of the media, which, in this particular instance, was very useful in helping us to influence women to such a point that many became willing participants in the first elections.

Because we were targeting all women, we had to make sure that the words and images on the posters we distributed would be easily understood. All of our slogans had one message, namely, that every woman has the right to vote. We even put up posters in all the major population centers reading, "When you vote, it is God alone that sees you." This was our way of telling women that they should not be persuaded by their husbands or fathers to vote for a particular candidate.

Other posters were specifically designed to influence women to vote for women, which brings us to another issue: the campaign to encourage women to become candidates. It was actually not that difficult to convince some women to become candidates. Throughout the Palestinian struggle, there have always been courageous women who are prepared to go against tradition and social custom in the name of furthering the national cause, and the women who eventually ran saw nothing strange in what they did. It was, however, far more difficult to persuade women to vote for women. One has to remember that we had some of the Islamic groups, including Hamas, saying things like "There is no good in a people whose head is a woman" and so on, which certainly did not help. What was even worse, was that even women were saying such things; for example, "But a woman's place is in the home, looking after her husband and children." Although hearing such things made my colleagues and me very angry, we knew where the women were coming from and that it was unreasonable to expect them to change their whole way of thinking in a moment.

Fortunately, in many cases the fact that voters could vote for more than one candidate actually helped us to persuade women and even some men to vote for at least one female candidate, and we actually had women saying, "I don't really believe that a woman would be any good as a politician, but as I can vote for several candidates and one of the candidates in my area is a woman, I might as well vote for her." In Jerusalem, it was much harder because 3 out of 7 were women, but I think that the male candidates were not good candidates in comparison with their female counterparts, which helped us quite a bit. Many people would say "I have heard about Abu Ala', but who is this guy Ahmad Al-Batsh?" Al-Batsh is quite well known in Jerusalem, but not, for example, in Hizma. At the last moment, Al-

Batsh came to Abu Dis and the people there decided that he is a decent man and gave him their vote. Zahira Kamal, fortunately, was more well known than any of the other candidates, even Abu Ala' with his financial support, because she has been here all her life.

Another important aspect of our work involved holding meetings with women in as many towns, cities, villages and camps as was possible. Prior to the meetings we printed about 10,000 copies of a very simple manual, telling women how important it was for them to vote and how easy the process actually was. Part of the manual was in a question and answer format, which made it easy to understand and helped dispel a lot of the myths surrounding the right of women to vote and the voting process itself. I started preparing the manual with the help of my colleagues when the Election Law was introduced at the end of November 1995, and I spent hours and hours trying to come up with something that would be easily understood by everyone. The manual was actually a very important tool, especially as it helped us to gain access to the women in the villages; we would show it to the head of the mosque, for example, and tell him that we wanted to hold a meeting there in order to teach the women living in the village how to vote. Once we had gained his support, it became much easier to win the support of the rest of the village.

Of course, we also used these gatherings to encourage women to vote for women and to introduce the local female candidates, and I believe that this face to face contact was very important. There was one huge rally that took place in a hall used for weddings where we managed to get Zahira Kamal, Rana Nashashibi and Hanan Ashrawi together; it was really exciting, especially as the rally was attended by both men and women. So basically, our campaign involved two things: one, making women aware about the need for them to vote and the actual voting process, and two, encouraging women to vote for women.

Prior to the elections, we were also very busy with another issue: the regulation issued by the Ministry of the Interior that banned all women from having their own passports unless they first obtained the signature of a male relative or guardian. So we were telling women not only that they should use their right to vote, but also telling that they should lobby decision-makers and get the ministry to cancel a very negative regulation that affected every single Palestinian women, even those running in the elections. During the demonstrations, we would shout at the male officials, "Um Jihad, Um Jihad, go and ask for permission from Jihad." The regulation was ridiculous! Here was a woman candidate, a national hero, the widow of Abu Jihad, and now she was being expected to go and ask her son's permission to obtain a passport. Fortunately, the majority of people realized how stupid the idea actually was. Zahira Kamal was another good example; when her father died, she had been forced to bring up her brothers and sisters, being the eldest. "And now," she would say, "you want me to go and seek the permission of a brother that I myself raised as if I were his mother?" It was hard for people to justify the regulation in the face of such logical arguments.

Everyone may remember the large demonstrations during which thousands of women threatened the Authority that if it did not show them respect and

grant them their rights, including the right to obtain a passport, then even though they had struggled throughout the *Intifada* to have a national authority, they would refuse to legitimize it by voting. We even approached the male candidates directly, telling them that if they did not give us their support, we, in turn, would not give them ours; fortunately, a large number of them decided to march with us. In Ramallah, for example, at least eight male candidates marched with us and guaranteed the women watching that "If you vote for me, I will guarantee better legislation concerning women's rights."

In this very busy period we used both the local and the international media to highlight the issue and held several demonstrations and sit-ins. At one point we brought the Minister of the Interior to our office to face hundreds of women, all of them standing there shouting; he looked absolutely petrified! We spent the three or four months prior to the elections trying to bring this issue to the foreground, and, happily, the regulation was eventually cancelled on 18 January 1996, just two days before the elections took place. That was really a great triumph for all Palestinian women.

Returning to the elections themselves, we knew all along that there was no point in encouraging women to vote unless we actually ensured that they went from their homes to the ballot boxes on election day. The way I played the game on election day was to bring three Arab women – one from Algeria, one from Tunisia, and one from France – and take them with me to visit women in the Old City of Jerusalem, for which I was responsible, and encourage them to tell their stories. They really helped, because they were able to tell the women they met as they went from house to house, "We as Arab women had the same experiences, and we are telling you not to be afraid."

The Israelis really did their best to disrupt the elections in Jerusalem. In the Old City, for example, the Shin Bet were at the doors of the polling station, telling women that if they voted, their photo would be taken and their rights to national insurance and healthcare etc., would be withdrawn. It eventually turned into a game of cat and mouse, with us running around telling the women – some of whom were really scared, despite the fact that they were convinced of the importance of voting – that they should not be afraid. Finally, after some fights that took place with some Hamas people, not to mention the Shin Bet, in the middle of Al-Wad Street, we were able to collect the women and take them in three buses to Dahiet Al-Barid to cast their votes. In the end, the percentage of women who actually voted was fairly high, which we considered a great success, especially as this was our first election experience.

The elections were not a success, however, if you see how many women candidates won; out of 28 candidates from all over Palestine, only five actually won a seat in the 88-member PLC. This was very disappointing, especially as it really looked at one stage as if all three women candidates in Jerusalem were going to get through. Of course, we will never really know what happened – that is another question altogether. What I can say is that all the Abu Dis women swore on the Quran that they had voted for all three of the female candidates in Jerusalem, which means that at least 3,500 women voted for them in Abu Dis alone.

DISCUSSION

Participant: Because no one really knows what happened, do you not think that it will be difficult for you to persuade women to vote in the future?

Terry Boullata: People are now questioning the value of the whole election process and I am not so sure that there will ever be another election. One has to remember that whatever affects women also affects men, which is why, in general, there is now so little faith amongst the general population.

Concerning what happened, we continued to lobby even after the votes were in, and we held several press conferences during which the issues of cheating and the loss of some ballot boxes were discussed. I remember that at one point after the votes had been counted, Zahira turned up with six ballot boxes from Beit Safafa; this was after the results had been announced. I also remember the case of the ballot boxes from Izzariyya that arrived in Abu Dis two days too late; considering that the two areas are right next door to one another, there was clearly something amiss.

Participant: But why didn't you go the media or the monitoring committee and explain what had been going on?

Rami Khouri: Whether the elections were fair or whether there was cheating are extraordinarily important issues, but they are not connected with what we are discussing today, namely, how to guarantee effective communication.

Terry Boullata: During the preparation period, we held a training course for women candidates, funded by the British Labor Party, during which some British experts provided our women candidates with training in media and communication skills. Not all the women were running as candidates for the PLC; some of them were working hard to be appointed as members of the local councils and I know that several of them were eventually elected. The course was very useful, as it taught women how to stand in front of a camera, how to sit, what to wear, how to gesture, and, when addressing the public, how to stand, for example, and how to prepare a speech, especially how to be to the point and not patronize or bore the audience by using flowery and unnecessary language. In other words, to talk about points one, two and three without going off the track, which is a common tendency amongst Arabs. Many of Ramallah's local council women took part in the program and benefited a great deal. I myself learned how to deal with the media more effectively, and now, if a journalist rings for an interview at an inopportune moment I simply say, "Give me your phone number and I will call you back in half an hour," by which time I am usually more relaxed and far better prepared.

APPENDICES

Using the Internet for
Fundraising Research and
Better Public Relations

Major Types of Media Events

'Tool-Box' of Media Materials

Selected PASSIA Internet
Resources Related to Civil
Society Empowerment

Using the Internet for Fundraising Research and Better Public Relations[1]

Donor research is the backbone of any successful fundraising effort. It used to be difficult to do if you could not afford expensive directories or access a specialized resource library. Today, we can all benefit from the Internet websites with useful reference works, general information, online training and advice for fundraisers. This listing is only a sampling and you are sure to find more as you explore their links to other resources. Note that many Internet sites are commercial.

FUNDRAISING RESEARCH & TRAINING:

1. *The Foundation Center* (www.fdncenter.org), a master website with many sub-sites, including information on US corporate and foundation donors; an online library of reference materials; links to websites of other foundations and nonprofit resources; a bookstore for ordering publications; and a series of online training programs in which you can learn the basics of grant seeking, funding research and proposal writing. There is even access to an 'online librarian'. Look for 'Guide to Funding for International and Foreign Programs' and 'Grants for Foreign and International Programs'.

2. *Internet Prospector* (w3.uwyo.edu/~prospect), an online newsletter serving the nonprofit fundraising community, with frequently updated information on donors, new research tools and how to use the Internet resources, and it includes an international reference section, which when last checked was promoting the Middle East Network Information Center at the University of Texas at Austin as the "epicenter for online information about the Middle East" (menic.utexas.edu/mes.html).

3. *The Nonprofit Times* site provides an online version of the newspaper with access to articles about strengthening nonprofit organizations, including fundraising, with links to other nonprofit sites: www.nptimes.com.

4. The *Grantsmanship Center*, a site with training and funding information for nonprofits with access to magazine articles and other publications and resources: www.tgci.com.

---

[1] Compiled by Kathy Sullivan, November 1998.

5. The *Council on Foundations*, representing grant-making organizations, provides access to more than 130 publications at the site, plus information about foundations. Look at 'Directory of International Grant-makers': www.cof.org

6. *Program on Nonprofit Corporations*: Fundraising via the Internet, accesses charity websites in North America, Europe and Australia, showing how these groups have initiated fundraising and what approaches were more effective than others: www.qut.edu.au/bus/ponc/ponc5.html#fundraising

7. The *Nonprofit Resource Center* site provides legal and grants-writing information plus links to support organizations and fundraising publications. You can also sign up for mailing lists of various organizations and services: www.not-for-profit.org

8. The *National Society of Fundraising Executives* (USA) site accesses more than 3,000 references and periodicals about fundraising and development: www.nsfre.org

9. Check out the book, *Fundraising and Friendraising on the Web*, a book by A.C. Finney and L. Blanchard, along with the synopsis of a one-day course on online fundraising offered at the University of Pennsylvania: www.fund-online.com

10. The European Foundation Center/Brussels, lists publications and information about foundation and corporate donors in Europe: www.efc.be

The following sites provide models or general support to nonprofits, including advice on using information technologies for planning and implementing PR activities.

GENERAL NONPROFIT/NGO RESOURCES & MODELS:

1. Good sample events publicity/organizing site: www.womlaw.org

2. Promotion of services to nonprofits and funding resources: www.funding-exchange.org

3. Excellent sample website for organization/presentation of content and issues from *AVSC International*, a reproductive health NGO: www.avsc.org

4. 'Best practices tool kit' from the *Benton Foundation*, to help nonprofits make effective use of communications and information technologies: www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/

5. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*'s collection of world-wide web sites and electronic discussion lists, for nonprofits , including links to sites that explain how to use the Internet to for fundraising/seeking donations: www.philanthropy.com

6. *The Philanthropy Journal Online/Philanthropy News Network Technology Report*, a wonderful resource that includes a lot of fundraising information as well as general help to nonprofits. www.pj.org

7. *Coyote Communications*, a site with 'technology tips' for nonprofits, on topics from database and software to how to promote your organization online by establishing and maintaining a website: www.coyotecom.com/tips.html

8. *Institute for Global Communications* offers resources and information for progressive organizations focusing on peace, economic and social justice, environmental protection and conflict resolution., with links to more than 15,000 networks and activists: www.igc.org

9. *Handsnet* allows public interest and human service organizations to communicate with as many as 5,000 other organizations, experts and newsmakers through this site which is updated daily and provides other nonprofit links: www.igc.apc.org/handsnet.

10. *Nonprofit Information Gallery* uses 13 search engines to access reference materials about financial management, taxes, legal issues, applying for grants, and planning events: www.infogallery.com.

11. *Nonprofit.Net's* site lets you look at other nonprofits' online sites. It is a commercial service for nonprofits, providing HTML design, www hosting, announcements and access to mailing lists: www.nonprofit.net.

12. *Nonprofit Nuts & Bolts* accesses short articles on improving nonprofit organizations; both current issues and back-issues: www.nutsbolts.com.

13. The bilingual (Arabic/English) site of the "BUNIAN" program for capacity building and networking of NGOs, funded by the EU and implemented by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation/Amman and the International Training and Management Institute /Beirut is worth checking out for news of training events, workshops, internships and consultations: www.bunian.org.jo. You can also email your website addresses to BUNIAN to be included in their links page with other regional NGOs: bunian@index.com.jo.

MAJOR TYPES OF MEDIA EVENTS[1]

The following examples for media events may be integrated with other special events.

> *Choose and use the appropriate event for your message. Don't call a news conference when a briefing or news release would do. Prepare well-researched news kits and quotable statements. Don't call meetings with the press lightly. Journalists will appreciate your not wasting their time and your organization will gain respect as a credible 'player'. Networking on a daily and weekly basis to develop relationships with the media will enhance the success of your formal news events.*

News Conferences: Announce serious 'hard' news; indicate to journalists that you have something important enough that a news release alone is not enough to tell it. Also implies that radio and TV should come to record/ interview the several spokespersons usually lined up to deliver and comment upon the news. Always provide news kits and, if needed, sound amplification systems so that questions/answers can be heard by everyone. Find out ahead of time if broadcast journalists have any special electrical or other equipment needs. Arrange for a quiet area or small room where interviews can be taped. News conferences should not last longer than one hour, including a questions and answer period.

News Briefings: Allow your organization to put its 'spin' on a timely issue and provide substantive background or statements from your spokespersons, without pretending that you are making news that day. Runs like a news conference but is 'softer' and more exploratory in nature. Try to schedule briefings for the slower news days of the week so that you are not competing with weekly cabinet briefings, start or close of the week business. Be prepared to reschedule if you are 'blown off the page' by some late-breaking news story.

Press Breakfasts (Lunches/Coffees, etc. according to your budget):
The 'softest' of formal media events. Keep journalists updated on your issues, without needing a current news 'hook.' Provide a kit with plenty of useful facts and background info that can be filed away for their next story on the subject. Such events usually start with a presentation from your spokesperson or expert, followed by a questions and answers and then discussion over refreshments. Helps keep up your contacts with the press in between big events or news conferences. Also, very useful for coalitions: you could have a monthly walk-in coffee/breakfast for the media, with a different NGO or coalition member giving the presentation each time.

---

[1] Compiled by Kathy Sullivan from various sources, 11/98.

'TOOL BOX' OF MEDIA MATERIALS[1]

NGOs and other nonprofit organizations dealing in sometimes complex and controversial issues need to use a wide range of materials and activities to get their message across to the media and target publics. News releases and news conferences are not enough! Diversify your efforts and reap the rewards. Many of the following pieces could be transmitted by e-mail, as well as by fax, mail or hand delivery, according to the accepted practices of your local media. Posting them on your website is another way to extend their use among your other publics and coalition groups:

1. **News Kits:** Supply all the basic information a reporter needs to write a story - and no more than that. It should look professional, showing that the organization knows what it is doing.

   News kits can be used in conjunction with a news briefing/conference or sent around to media outlets with a cover letter 'pitching' a story on your issue/organization. The parts of the kit, usually assembled in a pocket folder, should be well organized and easy to read but do not need complicated designs/printing. Any interesting graphs or figures should be put on a separate sheet, with the source clearly visible. Charts are only useful if they prove one's case. It is important to explain what tables and graphs indicate in words, remembering that in many cases, the people addressed may not be able to make use of them. You could also provide an 'electronic news kit' on computer diskette. Translate your own kit parts, which may include some or all of the following: **news releases, backgrounders, fact sheets, case studies, photos with captions or a videotape, statements, brochures** and **other publications.** You should make sure that every piece in the kit has an identifier - 'News Release', 'Background Information', etc, - and always use your letterhead for the first page of every paper and number the pages.

2. **News Releases:** Provide timely information about events or issues the public would want to know about. The news release should be the most condensed and most important bit of the news kit. Concentrate the main news (who, what, where, when, why, how and so what?) in the first sentence/paragraph, allowing the editor to decide whether to print part or all of the release or to assign a reporter to the story. Use your letterhead, write 'News Release' and the release date, and give the name of a 'contact' with day and evening phone numbers for the reporter to follow up. Bear in mind that the longer the release goes on, the less interesting it looks to the reader.

---

[1] Compiled by Kathy Sullivan from various sources, November 1998.

3. **Backgrounders:** Explain your issues or program goals in more detail so that the reporter can place the news item within the context of the ongoing discussion of the topic. Think of it as the written equivalent of a 'briefing.' Assume no prior knowledge on the part of the writer: quickly map out the development of your issue and highlight areas of controversy, importance or urgency. You may need more than one backgrounder if you have a highly complicated issue/event that should be broken down into parts. You may need to include a 'timeline' of important dates/events, for example, or may reprint letters or statements from some of your program beneficiaries (with their permission).

4. **Fact Sheets:** Help reporters skim useful and relevant data. Use a 'bullets' format and give the facts in numbers, figures and human terms; try to show the evolution of a problem/achievement. ("During the past seven years, the number of displaced families seeking shelter more than doubled, from 100,000 in 1990 to 230,000 in 1997." "Three out of four children (74 percent) admitted required medical attention for malnutrition or chronic illness.") Timelines can be very useful so if working in human rights, for example, one may include a chronology of critical events in human rights in Palestine, putting all the important dates and events. You may include several fact sheets covering different aspects, in the same kit.

5. **Case Studies/Short Features:** Give examples of how the big issues/ problems play out at a more micro-level: a single person, a family, an institution, a community, country, etc. This might involve some interviewing, whereby 'yes and no' questions should be avoided if one wants to get some good quotes. Select illuminating stories that put a human face on the problem or clearly demonstrate the beneficial results achieved through your programs/approach. Write them in the style of a feature story. Let program beneficiaries speak for themselves, in their own words, wherever possible. Be prepared to give reporters access to the people featured; they may want to do their own take on the case study.

6. **Statements:** Respond to breaking news or provide reporters with a 'canned' quote they can insert into a broader story. Should be released quickly (within an hour or so after the news event). Not more than one or two pages long, they should be attributed to a named spokes-person for your organization (or, even better, for the constituency as a whole), and should be highly quotable. Take a clear position, spell out the consequences of the event for your constituencies/clients, and propose the next course of action. (Including them in news kits provides quotes for insertion in a news story.) Anticipate things: if you know that some big decision is about to be made, prepare your position in advance, and, having drafted it, sit down with your superior/s in order to tie up any loose ends.

7. **Photos with Captions:** Encourage the press to use your story; on a busy news day, could win you a photo story with a deep caption instead of having the whole kit end up in the trash. May be tied to case studies (see above). Provide sharp black and white photos or color with strong contrast. Clearly label original photos on the back or print them on glossy paper with captions/credits on wide white margins. Identify all persons, places, activities in the photos, with dates. Photos often end up in photo files and may show up months or years later… to illustrate an entirely different story!

8. **Video News Release:** A new phenomenon that provides footage for TV broadcasts, which makes it more likely that your event/issue will be covered now or later. You hire a company to produce the master video for you and provide broadcast format cassettes for the use of TV stations/satellite channels. (Issues-oriented videotapes also can be effective fundraising tools with individual, corporate and community group donor prospects, for coalition-building meetings, and for general PR purposes.)

9. **Brochures/Other Organizational Publications:** Provide a more glossy presentation of your organization, program or issues. Considered as background by reporters, not news, but may give them ideas for future stories. Don't expect to see your promotional brochure quoted in the paper. It is not always good to spend a lot of money on a brochure when you ask people for money, but it should always look professional. Sometimes it is better to send a simple newsletter four times a year, rather than a glossy annual report.

10. **Calendar Announcements:** Alert the general public, through the media, about an event in which you want their participation. May be directed to a special section of the paper. Usually half-page in length and written so they can be used exactly as sent. Give a catchy or provocative slant to the announcement heading, followed by text on who, what, why, where and how much (if a ticket/fee). In a cover letter/fax, tell the editor from what date you would like them to start running your announcement and when they can stop. Radio/TV also may use calendar announcements if you adapt them for the spoken word - see 'public service announcements' below.

11. **Public Service Announcements:** 'Free advertising' for nonprofits and charitable groups who are 'serving the public good.' Used, for example, for the release of a new publication. Check the regulations/guidelines with your local radio and TV stations. Usually are sandwiched between regular programming and paid ads on a space-available basis. They should be provided as three little versions of the same announcement timed to fill 20, 30 and 60 seconds (labeled that way). You must condense your information and start with a catchy line, maybe ask a question. ("Would you like to give your youngest children a better chance to succeed in

school - and life? Join the NGO X for a demonstration of how parents can be their babies' first teachers (on date, at time, at place). Call (telephone) for more information.") Read the draft announcement aloud for timing and to make sure there are no awkward phrases. PSAs not only draw an audience for your programs but create a better image and higher profile for your organization in the community.

12. **Publication Announcements:** Notify the media (and other organizations that can help disseminate the news to important target publics) that you are releasing a new publication that is relevant to their interests. Usually about one page long, they should be written for printing verbatim. Provide a synopsis of the publication, who should read it/who needs it, and details of how to order it. If you have a quote or two from very well-known experts or respected community leaders commending the publication, use them in the text. (If you are releasing a major study, poll or report, you should use a news release format, not a publication announcement, and should hold a launch or news briefing event.)

13. **Media Advisories:** Alert the media that you have an important event or potential story coming up so that they can prepare to cover it properly. E-mail, fax or deliver them to news editors and key reporters three to ten days before your event, depending upon how complex it is. (If you want extensive TV coverage of a multi-faceted event, you need to allow more advance time.) Keep the advisory to one page. Stress the most provocative, controversial or glamorous aspects of your event, along with the basics: who, what, when, where, why. Note any special photo or video opportunities, mention VIPs or experts who will speak and be available for interviews. Don't give away the 'news' ahead of time (e.g., poll results) but do convince the editor it's worth covering. ("X, the oldest and largest NGO in Palestine working on issue Z, will release results of its November 1998 survey of Palestinians' attitudes towards…, the first survey on this subject since…, conducted in cooperation with YYY University.") You must name a contact editors can call for more information.

14. **Letters to the Editor:** Respond immediately - preferably within 24 hours - to an event, statement, op-ed or letter, which has been printed/aired by the media outlet. Letters should be brief, logical and quotable. Attach a one-paragraph biography of the person signing the letter (your boss) to give editors background and enhance the writer's credibility as a commentator on the issue. Target one outlet only - do NOT send exactly the same letter to more than one newspaper at the same time. Do not write to *The Jordan Times* about something that you have read in *The New York Times.*

15. **Op-Eds** (which does not mean opinion editorial, but opposite the editorial page): Traditionally appear opposite the editorial page under the byline of the person submitting the piece. Should provide original commentary on a current issue of public interest, preferably something al-

ready being covered in the news. (Can also be used to draw attention to a problem/issue that has been ignored but needs to be very compelling.) Most papers prefer about 650-word-long articles; some will accept more. This is not a news article; it should take a position and support it with facts/experience. Attach a short biography of the person submitting the op-ed and give his/her title and affiliation with your organization. You could send these to more than one outlet at a time but not to more than one in a certain category/market. For example, you could send the same op-ed to a major American daily, a major UK daily, a major Israeli daily and to a Palestinian paper, depending on the target audiences you want to reach. Often it is more effective to select only one outlet, informing them that this is offered 'exclusively' and following up within a few days to know if it will be used. If declined, you can offer it elsewhere.

16. **Editorial Memos/Meetings:** Request in writing that the newspaper/station itself comment on an issue of importance to the public in an editorial capacity. Provides background on why the issue commands such attention and asks for a meeting with the editorial board to provide them with a more complete briefing. The meeting is a lobbying visit to convince the media outlet to take a position (hopefully, in line with yours), and provide them with needed information/contacts. Good editors will also seek out your opposition for balance before committing to a position.

SELECTED PASSIA INTERNET RESOURCES

CIVIL SOCIETY

http://civnet.org/index.html
International resources for Civic Education and Civil Society; includes articles, documents, teaching material and links.

http://www.pactworld.org/toolbox.html
Everything on civil society: understanding the concept; CSOs and government; financing and managing CSOs; networking; advocacy; Human Resource Development; democracy; resources, and tool boxes.

http://www.civicus.org/net.html
International alliance dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.

http://www.cpn.org/cpn.html
The Civic Practices Network site with its tools section, including a 'Civic Dictionary on the Models and Techniques of Democratic Practices and Civic Work'; full-text manuals and guides for civic work; and course syllabi focussing on democratic issues.

http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/~ccsi/ccsihome.html
Site of the Center for Civil Society International that supports the development of civil society with a focus on Russia and Central/Eastern Europe.

http://www.ned.org/page_3/ICDS/articles.html
Online version of the Civil Society – Democratization in the Arab World magazine from the Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies, Cairo.

http://nt1.ids.ac.uk/eldis/hot/civsoc.htm
Major research documents, articles, websites and organizations dealing with the issues of civil society.

GENERAL SOURCES FOR NGOS

http://www.not-for-profit.org/
Comprehensive directory of links and material on fundraising, philanthropy; volunteers, human resources, advocacy, PR, management consultants; publications; research and policy studies.

http://www-personal.si.umich.edu/~nesbeitt/nonprofits/ nonprofits.html
Information and resources on nonprofit organizations, including Funding, Management, Technology, Philanthropy, and Volunteers.

http://www.mapnp.org/
The Nonprofit Managers' Library: materials and links on topics such as Administration; Boards; Chief Executive; Communication Skills; Ethics for Managers; Finances; Fundraising/Grant Writing; Marketing/PR; Training & Development; Management & Leadership; Personnel; Program Evaluation; Strategic Planning; Quality Management; Volunteer Management.

http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/
Community toolbox with over 3000 pages in over 100 sections of how-to materials related to community development issues.

http://www.envirolink.org/connect/tools/
Toolbox for activists covering subjects such as Recruiting People, Running a Meeting, Fundraising, Writing Letters to the Editor, Using the Media, Planning an Event, and Lobbying.

http://www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq/
Links to all kinds of resources on issues such as Starting a Nonprofit Organi-zation, Board and Management; Volunteerism; Computing and Internet for Nonprofits; Marketing; Fundraising; Education and Training Resources.

http://www.clark.net/pub/pwalker/subject.html
Detailed nonprofit resources catalogue; subject listings include: Fundraising and Giving; Accounting; Administration; Community Development; Meeting Planning; Policy Development; Volunteerism/Activism; Human Services.

http://www.idealist.org/
Huge database of publications, material and links related to on NGOs (e.g., how to start and manage NGOs; financial management; foundations; fundraising; government relations; lobbying; and public relations).

http://www.tmcenter.org/library/Links.html
Extensive list of links and resources for Nonprofit Organizations.

http://www.supportcenter.org/sf/resources/index.html
Links and material for nonprofit management and development. See especially the Nonprofit GENIE and its 'Answer' section to FAQ's.

http://www.clearinghouse.net/cgi-bin/chadmin/viewcat/Business___ Employment/human_resources/non_profit_organizations?kywd++
Links to guides on fundraising, nonprofit organizations, and public services.

http://www.cybervpm.com/resource.htm
Volunteer Program Management Resources.

http://comnet.org/net/net.html
Gateway to sites for the nonprofit community, organized by topics such as education, government, grants & funding, health care services, human services, and political activism.

http://www.charityvillage.com/cvhome.html
Supersite for the nonprofit sector with many links to news, jobs, information and resources for executives, staffers, donors, and volunteers.

HUMAN RESOURCES

http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html
Website for human development resources, including online articles, training guides, and links.

http://www.nbs.ntu.ac.uk/staff/lyerj/list/hrpub.htm
Internet publications on Human Resource Management.

http://www.tcm.com/trdev/
Training & Development Resource Center for Human Resources.

http://www.astd.org/
Information, tools, articles and links related to training, performance, evaluation, etc.

http://www.escape.ca/~rbacal/articles.htm
Online articles on nonprofit management problems and solutions; sub-headings include: Training, Development, Learning and Human Resources; Defusing Hostility and Cooperative Communication; Team Development.

MEDIA, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

http://www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/
Tools to help nonprofits make effective use of communications and information technologies; includes guides on how to publicize online efforts.

http://www.uwex.edu/li/links_marketing.html
Links of the Learning Institute.

http://www.csc.org/stratcommtrainint.html
Online training program with a dynamic, in-depth approach that provides a unique conceptual understanding as well as the practical skills needed to develop and implement a communications plan.

http://www.chevron.com/community/other/pub-relations/index.html
Public relations tips and tools for non-profit organizations, including how to develop a public-relations plan and how to work with the news media. The site also provides sample press releases, public-service announcements, publicity flyers, and thank-you notes.

http://www.netaction.org/training/
Online training course with links to many sites on internet-based PR, fundraising, advocacy and other publicity and activism tools.

http://www.abacon.com/pubspeak/
Website with tips on public speaking and preparing speeches.

http://www.chevron.com/community/other/pub-relations/index.html
Webpage with tips on profitable public relations for nonprofit organizations; includes case studies and samples (e.g., news releases, announcements)

http://www.coyotecom.com/consult.html
Website devoted to effectively enhance the communications activities, of non-profit organizations, including marketing, public relations, general communications management, etc.

http://www.smartbiz.com/sbs/cats/comm.htm
*Articles, checklists, 'how-to' tips, etc., on communications (effective writing, presentations, etc.). See **www.smartbiz.com/sbs/cats/material.html** for how to prepare material (brochures, etc.), and **www.smartbiz.com/sbs/cats/pr.html** for public relations issues (e.g., press kits, working with the press, writing press materials, etc.)*

http://www.igc.org/igc/help/www/epub.html
A range of electronic publishing services to help organizations disseminate information. The guide outlines the various services, how and why to use them, and provides basic instructions as well as communication tools.

http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/effective.html
Site focussing on effective presentations – written and spoken - with many related links.

http://www.mapnp.org/library/mrktng/org_cmm.htm
Practical suggestions on how to ensure sufficient communications within nonprofits and with their external stakeholders. Chapters include communication problems, key principles for effective communications).

http://www.sonic.net/~jill/resource.html#PR1
Tools and guidelines for successful public relations campaigns and development of press related materials.

http://www.strategiccomm.com/
Website devoted to strategic communications. For tips, checklists, and articles click 'Resource'.

http://www.impulse-research.com/impulse/resource.html
Large lists of links to public relations online resources and organizations.

http://www.2020vision.org/press.html
Tips on how to use the media effectively.

http://www.coopcomm.org/w7a1toc.htm
Full text online version of a workbook and reader on cooperative communication skills (downloadable version available)

FUNDRAISING

http://www.uwex.edu/li/links_fund.html
Numerous links to websites focussing on fundraising and grant writing issues and tips.

http://www.fundsnetservices.com/main.htm
Lots of resources on funding, grant writing, nonprofits, research and educational resources.

http://www.fundraising.co.uk/
Everything on fundraising: information, links, strategies, agencies, etc.

http://philanthropy.com/free/resources/fresources.htm
Internet fundraising resources compiled by the Chronicle of Philanthropy.

http://fdncenter.org/
*Includes an online library – see **http://fdncenter.org/onlib/onlib.html** - with links to Nonprofit Resources; Material on Grant Seeking; a Guide to Funding Research and Resources; a Proposal Writing Course; Literature on the Nonprofit Sector; and Common Grant Application Forms.*

http://www.iknow.org/Fundraising.html#costs
Great list of tips and links to fundraising and grantwriting sources.

http://www.philanthropysearch.com/fundraising.html
Comprehensive and annotated list of links to fundraising sources on the internet.